Student Motivation to Participate in an Elective Classroom Music Curriculum: A Case Study of the Multi-dimensional Aspects of Participation and Motivation

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education

Faculty of Education
University of Tasmania

February 2006

DECLARATION

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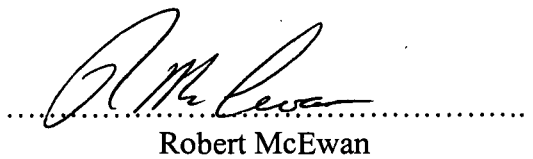

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to identify and examine the factors that influenced student enrolment behaviour when considering the Year Nine elective classroom music curriculum in a high fee paying independent coeducational Kindergarten to Year Twelve day and boarding school in a regional city of New South Wales. The study was conceived from a concern with declining student participation in the classroom music curriculum during the transition from the primary to secondary school. The decline in student participation in school music has been identified as an issue nationally and internationally. A number of research studies have examined the complex processes and inter-relationships between a range of factors perceived to influence student decisions to engage or disengage with musical activities generally.

A social-cognitive approach to student motivation underpinned the conceptual framework of this research. The key motivational theories of task values, self-concept, self-efficacy, and attribution theory were explored in relation to the contextual factors of school culture, peer group influences, family values, and student perceptions of teachers, as they relate to student enrolment behaviour. The investigation of cognitive mediation processes and their interaction with the full range of social influences enabled the consideration of a range of factors that could operate simultaneously to reveal interdependence between motivational and contextual factors.

To facilitate an understanding of the motivational factors influencing student enrolment choice, an interpretive case study design was employed that acknowledged the context in which the student perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes were grounded. This approach provided opportunities for continuous interpretation and the construction of local meaning according to the social world of the participants.

Data were generated through student surveys and student and parent interviews. The survey data served a formative function by providing a 'snapshot' of the factors, as they exist across the full student cohort. The principal means of data analysis was provided through the rich data generated from purposive sample interviews with fifteen students and their parents. These data are considered in relation to literature in both social-cognitive science and music education.

The findings suggest individual student's motivation to participate in the classroom music curriculum is differentiated according to the contextual interventions that make select cultural values more salient. The differential relations between the various contributing motivational and contextual factors represent multiple pathways that students may follow, with concomitant differences in motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum. Tension between students' multiple goals created hierarchies of complex relationships between contextual and motivational factors.

The findings highlight the need for teachers and schools to be cognizant of the wide range of motivational factors operating simultaneously when developing intervention strategies intended to promote student participation in the elective classroom music curriculum.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I extend a most sincere thanks to Associate Professor Margaret Barrett who became a mentor and friend during this project. Her encouragement and belief in both my ability and the value of this project gave me confidence to extend myself and the motivation to persist. I have been most fortunate to have shared this experience with someone who both inspired and cared about my intellectual development. Her constructive guidance, dedication and expertise all contributed to my own personal development as a consequence of this project.

I also acknowledge the cooperation of the school and the willingness of the students and parents who shared their experiences and perceptions. In particular, I thank Mrs. Vicki Lynar whose willingness, enthusiasm and generosity to assist in the data collection process were critically important to this research project.

I thank my mother, Dianne, and father, Bill, who provided me with the musical opportunities and encouragement as a child that began my love of music. Their unfailing support and encouragement was again demonstrated throughout this project.

My deep thanks and love go to my son, Tom, who patiently waited for me to come home from long hours of study.

This project could not have been undertaken without the love and support of my wife, Gaye. Her patience and constant reassurance throughout the past six years have been a source of strength and her own strength in the early years of this project was to become a source of inspiration. This thesis is as much a testament to her stamina as it is to mine.

Without the support, understanding and love of my wife, Gaye, and son, Tom, this project would not have been possible and I dedicate this project to them both.

PAPERS PRESENTED FROM THESIS

Sections of Chapter Two, Chapter Four and Chapter Five were reported in papers presented at the 4th Asia Pacific Symposium on Music Education Research and the XXVth Australian Association for Research in Music Education. The papers were published in the subsequent conference proceedings.

PUBLICATIONS:

McEwan, R., 2003. Student motivation to participate in an elective classroom music curriculum: A case study of the multi-dimensional aspects of motivation, *Curriculum Innovation in Music: Proceedings from the 4th Asia Pacific Symposium on Music Education Research*, The Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong, 246 – 252.

McEwan, R., 2003. The role of the socio-cultural context in framing student music self-concept and task values as factors influencing enrolment behaviour in an elective classroom music curriculum, *Artistic Practice as Research: Proceedings of the XXVth Annual Conference*, Australian Association for Research in Music Education, Salmat, Adelaide, 134-145.

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INTRODUCTION

> Research into the problematic areas of human motivation particularly related to artistic activity, remains in relative infancy, and may prove to be the missing piece of the jigsaw which will allow us to develop a clearer understanding of humanity's need and drive to participate in music and artistic pursuits generally. (Kemp, 1997, p. 41)

1.1 General background to the study

The importance of music education in Australian schooling has been recognised by Australian State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers of Education who endorsed the *National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century* (MCEETYA, 1999). The national goals for schooling require state and national curricula frameworks to include music as a component of all children's education through the identification of music as an essential strand in one of the eight national key learning areas, "The Arts" (MCEETYA, 1999). Statements of syllabus rationale from each of the states and territories of Australia emphasise the role of musical engagement in children's education, for example in "enrich[ing] the physical, aesthetic, emotional, intellectual and social development of all students." (NSW Board of Studies, 1998, p. 2). Such educational aims that recognise the value of music in a child's education for the achievement of broader educational goals are consistent with numerous music advocacy statements (for example, International Society for Music Education: www.isme.org/article/archive/26). Elliot (1995) argues the achievement of many of

these broader educational goals is unique to music, heightening the need for music to be included in all children's education.

> The values of music and music education are several and profound. And they are unique to musicing, music listening, and the multidimensional nature of musical works. If this is so, then music education has a significant contribution to make to society in general and to the music education of young people in particular. (Elliott, 1995, p. 297)

Concurrent with the strong philosophical arguments supporting the inclusion of music in all children's education (Elliott, 1995; Gardner, 1982, 1983; Parker, 1990; Paynter, 2002; Pitts, 2000; Reimer, 2002; Swanwick, 1999) music is described as the primary leisure activity of adolescents (Boal-Palheiros & Hargreaves, 2001; North, Hargreaves & O'Neill, 2000). Adolescents represent a robust music market where the massive music media of recorded music companies and sales, radio stations, television programming, music publications, and live concerts in popular music styles reflect a vibrant music industry that serves this large audience (Zillmann & Gan, 1997). The prominent role of music in the lives of adolescents has been explained from a social psychological perspective, where its primary function is viewed as a means of development and expression of an individual's sense of identity (Hargreaves, Miell & MacDonald, 2002). Individual music preferences during adolescence establish a musical identity that can define social group membership and shared cultural practices (Hargreaves, Miell & MacDonald, 2002; Tarrant, North & Hargreaves, 2002). Despite the function and prominence of popular music in the lives of adolescents, a decline in student participation in school music activities during transition periods in school, such as that from primary to secondary education, has

been observed (Colley & Comber, 2003; Hendley, Stables & Stables, 1996; Lamont, Hargreaves, Marshall & Tarrant, 2003; O'Neill, Sloboda, Boulton & Ryan, 2002; Ross, 1995; Sloboda, 2001).

The disparity between student attitudes and levels of engagement with music encountered in school contexts and the music experienced outside of school has been the subject of a number of studies over the past decade. Ross (1995) offered a provocative critique of music education in the UK, referring to the results of a survey of secondary school students' attitudes towards the arts (Hannam, 1992) where music was described as a "failed arts subject" (Ross, 1995, p. 187). Ross observed that students entering the first year of secondary schooling demonstrated generally positive attitudes towards music and that these attitudes seemed "to be subject to massive erosion in the course of their first year's experience in school music" (Ross, 1995, p. 188). Despite major curriculum reform efforts and improved teacher training during the 1970s and 1980s, Ross (1995) suggested little appeared to have changed with secondary school students' attitudes towards school music. Whilst respondents to Ross' views criticised his crude, negative tone and rejected the philosophical underpinnings on which these were based, problems in music education were acknowledged during the transitional stage between primary and secondary schooling (Gammon, 1996; Plummeridge, 1997). The debate benefited from the contributions of Gammon (1996) and Plummeridge (1997), as the dire situation presented by Ross (1995) was balanced with examples of innovation and development in music education.

More recent studies in the UK that have been concerned with student levels of engagement in school music have demonstrated overall attitudes towards school music to be more positive amongst students in the early years of secondary schooling when compared to earlier studies (Hargreaves, Marshall, Lamont & Tarrant, 2002; O'Neill, Sloboda, Boulton & Ryan, 2001). A disjunction between the attitudes to, and levels of engagement with, school and non-school music, however, continues to exist.

Within the Australian context, there exists "a general perception that Australian school music education is approaching a state of crisis" (DEST, 2005, p. 2). The disparity between young peoples' engagement with music in school and non-school contexts (Rosevear, 2003), together with a body of research revealing a concerning decline in the status and quality of music education in Australia (for example, DEST, 2005; Stevens, 2003; Temmerman, 2005) has contributed to renewed advocacy and action. The level of concern for music education was reflected in the debate regarding the importance of music in the education of all young Australians, held in Australia's federal parliament on February 10, 2003. This debate served as a catalyst that launched a National Review of School Music Education. The final report of this national review described the current state of Australian music education to be at "a critical turning point" and "at time when action must be taken" (DEST, 2005, p. xxvii).

One explanation for the continued decline in student engagement levels with school music is the failure of curriculum reform efforts to consider the motivational needs of students.

> The success of recent curriculum reforms in various countries in our [Asia-Pacific] region of the world rests on the degree to which music teachers are able to recognise the importance of basing their work on those motivational processes which have been shown in a wide range of education research to enhance learning and teaching. ... teachers and educational planners need to become more cognizant of the personal and environmental catalysts which shape children's decisions to choose to participate or not to participate in each arts subject.
>
> (McPherson, 2003, p. 15)

Despite extensive educational research in student motivation over the past two decades, much of this work has been limited to a small number of academic settings principally those of Mathematics, English, and Science, with relatively little of the findings of the motivational research having been validated in music (Austin & Vispoel, 2000). Research is needed that explores the interaction between the full range of motivational processes and salient social influences as factors in the development of student motivation to participate in music activities (Moore, Burland & Davidson, 2003).

The decline in student engagement levels in school music identified nationally and internationally was highlighted in my professional life as a Director of Music at a high fee paying independent coeducational Kindergarten to Year Twelve day and boarding school in a regional city of New South Wales. Low student enrolments in the elective classroom music curriculum had been experienced in this school over an extended period of time. This situation prompted me to explore in depth those factors that

influenced student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum (from Year Nine) in this educational setting.

As part of my role as the Director of Music within the school that served as the setting for this study, I taught two of the five non-elective music classes in each of the Year Seven and Eight cohorts. This interaction with students during the years of declining student motivation to participate in the Year Nine elective classroom music curriculum provided an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the factors that contributed to student music curriculum enrolment behaviour within this natural setting.

1.2 Setting

Student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum was explored within the specific setting of a high fee paying independent coeducational Kindergarten to Year Twelve day and boarding school in a regional city of New South Wales. Music occupied an important place within the broader school community. The classroom music curriculum was well resourced with specialised music facilities and staffing. A co-curricular music program operated independently of the classroom music curriculum with student participation occurring outside of the normal school academic timetable. The co-curricular music program was comprised of five choirs, three concert bands, an orchestra, stage band, brass ensemble, string quartet and woodwind quintet. While student participation in the elective classroom music curriculum was low, 28% of students enrolled in the school were participating in individual instrumental and vocal music tuition at the time of this study. The school had enjoyed a history of student achievement at diploma levels in external music

examinations together with a range of successful performances from school ensembles in regional and national performance competitions. The success of school ensembles and individual student achievements had received considerable positive attention from the school community with each success being advertised both within the school and broader community.

Despite the high student participation rates in the co-curricular music program at the time of the study, the elective classroom music curriculum faced a legitimate crisis. Members of the senior administration staff at the school had raised concerns regarding low student enrolment in the Year Nine classroom music curriculum and indicated that this situation of low student enrolment threatened the economic viability of the class. This situation, together with a strong personal belief in the multiple benefits of music in all children's education, initiated an exploration of the factors influencing student music curriculum enrolment choice.

1.3 Research aims and approach

This study aimed to identify and provide insight into those motivational and contextual factors that influenced student classroom music enrolment behaviour within the specific setting of a high fee paying independent coeducational Kindergarten to Year Twelve day and boarding school in a regional city of New South Wales. This study specifically examined student and parent perceptions of the motivational and contextual factors that influenced classroom music enrolment behaviour of students, average age thirteen years, when considering participation in the elective Year Nine classroom music curriculum within this specific educational setting.

The research questions that guided the study were:

1. What factors influence student participation in the elective classroom music curriculum?
2. What components of the compulsory classroom music curriculum contribute to student motivation to participate in the elective music curriculum?
3. What perceptions do students hold of their own abilities, attitudes and knowledge of music?

To gain an in-depth understanding of the full complexity of the motivational and contextual factors that influenced student enrolment behaviour, an interpretive approach was required that enabled the co-construction of meaning between the researcher and the researched and acknowledged the social world of the participants. To facilitate this understanding, an interpretive case study design was employed that acknowledged the context in which the student perceptions, beliefs and attitudes about the classroom music curriculum were grounded (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Data gathering instruments and questioning techniques were selected according to their capacity to capture a richness and intensity of response according to the multitude of descriptions of the life world of the student participants.

Data collection methods included survey, individual semi-structured interviews with students and semi-structured pair interviews with students' parents. A survey was administered to the full Year Eight cohort (n = 82) to identify the range of factors that may influence student elective curriculum enrolment behaviour. While this survey data provided a 'snapshot' of the factors influencing student music curriculum

enrolment behaviour, in-depth interviews served as the primary means of data generation. Interviews were conducted with a total of fifteen students in the Year Eight cohort. The student interview sample comprised five students invited to participate from each of three purposive samples (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) outlined below:

1 Students who had elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

2 Students participating in instrumental or vocal music tuition who had not elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

3 Students with limited or no previous instrumental or vocal music tuition who had elected not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Independent pair interviews were conducted with the parents of each interviewed student to add breadth, complexity, richness and depth to the inquiry (Flick, 2002). The three purposive interview samples encompassed all levels of student participation in school music at the transition point that was the focus of this study (Year Eight students making elective curriculum decisions for Year Nine).

A social-cognitive approach to student motivation underpinned the conceptual framework on which this research approach was based. This approach sought to examine cognitive mediational processes and their interaction with social influences

as factors on the development of student motivation to participate in music activities (Moore, Burland & Davidson, 2003). Expectancy-value theory of motivation, developed by Wigfield and Eccles (2000), provided a model that enabled the key social-cognitive variables of task values, self-concept and self-efficacy, and attribution theory to be explored in relation to the contextual factors of school culture, peer group influences, family values, and student perceptions of teachers as they relate to student enrolment behaviours.

1.4 Significance of the study

The limited but growing body of music education research literature that has explored issues in student motivation in music has been focused largely on the investigation of motivation to participate in music performance (Arnold, 1997; MacKenzie, 1991; McPherson & McCormick, 1999; O'Neill & McPherson, 2002) and motivation towards higher levels of achievement in classroom music (Asmus, 1986; Austin & Vispoel, 1992; Legette, 1998). Little research has investigated the motivational factors influencing student enrolment behaviour of early adolescents in Australian classroom music contexts. While concerns regarding low student enrolments in early secondary classroom music curricular are not new, much of this research has been characterised by a focus on select motivational factors, rather than one that seeks to integrate both motivational and contextual factors.

The findings from this investigation serve to underpin a review of the current non-elective classroom music curriculum within this specific school setting in order to address declining student participation in the elective classroom music curriculum. This study also provides a valuable extension to the broader body of music education

research by employing an integrative framework thoroughly grounded in the motivational literature. This integrative framework enabled the investigation of a range of factors according to the multiple goals of social, personal and academic interests.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is organised into six chapters. A review of relevant motivational literature in the fields of music education and social-cognitive science is provided in Chapter Two. The methodology employed in this research approach is outlined in Chapter Three. The analysis and discussion of data according to the key motivational factors is presented in Chapter Four. Chapter Five provides an analysis and discussion of data related to the role of contextual factors as contributing factors in student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum. Chapter Six contains a concluding discussion and provides recommendations for theory and practice in music education.

Chapter Two reviews the literature related to the key motivational and contextual factors that shape student motivation. The limited body of motivational research literature reporting findings in Australian music education contexts is supplemented with literature drawn from research in Great Britain and North America. The extent to which New South Wales shares similar educational and socio-cultural characteristics with these regions provides opportunities to clarify findings within this specific school setting.

A detailed description of the research procedures employed in this study is presented in Chapter Three. This methodology chapter reports on the rationale for the interpretive case study research design, survey and interview data collection methods and data analysis strategies employed in investigating the research questions. Contextual information related to the regional New South Wales independent secondary school setting, Year Eight student participants and my role as the researcher is included in this chapter as elements shaping data generation.

The critical analysis and discussion of data generated through student surveys and student and parent interviews is presented across two chapters. Chapter Four provides an analysis and discussion of data related to the key motivational theories of task values, music self-concept and music self-efficacy, and student causal attributions. Chapter Five provides an analysis and discussion of data related to the role of contextual factors in shaping student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum. In each of these chapters, survey data serves a formative function by providing a 'snapshot' of the factors as they exist across the full student cohort. The primary data were generated through student and parent interviews as these data provided richness and opportunity to co-construct meaning in a manner not possible through the survey instrument. The analysis of interview data focused on the interpretation and co-construction of meaning, with emerging themes considered in relation to literature in both social-cognitive science and music education.

The concluding discussion is presented in Chapter Six. The initial research questions are used to synthesise the analysis of data across the range of motivational and contextual factors to provide a summary of findings. Conclusions, recommendations

and future research directions based on the summary of findings are presented, with the limitations of the study included to qualify the transferability of findings to other educational contexts.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

When exploring student perceptions of the factors that influence participation in an elective classroom music curriculum, it is necessary to examine the research questions in light of existing theoretical explanations and research evidence from previous work in the field. Much of the work related to a student's desire to participate in a learning process, and the reasons or goals that underlie student involvement or noninvolvement, has centred on an understanding of the factors that contribute to student motivation (Brophy, 1998).

Despite extensive educational research in student motivation over the past two decades, much of this work has been limited to a small number of academic settings, principally participation in Mathematics, English and Science learning experiences within classroom settings (Austin & Vispoel, 2000). Much of the music education literature related to student motivation has been based around participation in instrumental music tuition (Arnold, 1997; Hallam, 2002, p 232; MacKenzie, 1991; McPherson & McCormick, 1999; 2000; O'Neill & McPherson, 2002) and motivation towards higher levels of achievement in classroom music (Asmus, 1986; Austin & Vispoel, 1992; Legette, 1998). Considerably less research has investigated the full range of motivational and contextual factors influencing the enrolment decisions of non-elective and elective classroom music students who engage in the general study of music. To supplement the relatively small body of motivational literature related specifically to participation in classroom music, the following review of literature

brings together key motivational factors, drawing from related studies within the field of music education. From this literature, critical factors of motivation will be identified and implications for student motivation in classroom music will be discussed.

The review of literature is organised into three sections. The first section provides a conceptualisation of motivation that underpins the review of the literature. The second section reviews the literature related to the key motivational factors of task values, self-concept, self-efficacy, attribution theory, and goal theory. The third section reviews literature related to the contextual factors of school culture, peer group influences, family values, and student perceptions of teachers as factors in shaping student motivation.

2.2 Motivation as a theoretical construct

Despite the enormous body of educational and psychological research in the area of student motivation over the past thirty years, a single universally accepted definition of motivation remains elusive (Pittman, 1998). The majority of definitions offered by educational theorists refer, in general terms, to student motivation being the desire to participate, persist, pursue, and value particular learning processes or goals (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996). While these broad definitions remain relatively consistent in their meaning, educational theorists recognise that a definition of student motivation also concerns the reasons or factors that initiate a student's desire, or otherwise, to participate, persist, pursue, and value particular processes or goals. It is the source of a student's motivation that presents the complex multifaceted nature of this construct

and that has educational researchers continuing to explore student motivation in a wide range of contexts and cultures.

Much of the large body of motivational literature has located the range of sources of motivation within two fundamental orientations, either intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation has been widely accepted to exist when a task is performed to satisfy an interest the individual holds in the activity (Lepper & Henderlong, 2000), while extrinsic motivation has been defined as a source of motivation external to the individual and activity (Hidi, 2000).

While the two separate orientations of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation continue to underpin much of the motivation literature (Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 1999; Eisenberger & Cameron, 1996; Vallerand, 1997), a growing body of literature in the social-cognitive sciences has drawn attention to the complex interaction between the two orientations (Csikzentmihalyi, 1990; Lepper & Henderlong, 2000). A social-cognitive perspective of 'person in context' proposes behaviour to be a function of the individual's perceptions of contextual factors and personal abilities based on the individual's interaction with the environment (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). A student's motivational orientation, therefore, is bound within contextual factors and not limited to global orientations. Task-specific, domain-specific and situational aspects combine with affective dimensions to shape student motivation (Csikzentmihalyi, 1990; Pintrich & De Groot, 1990; Turner & Meyer, 1999; Urdan, 1999).

Consistent with a social-cognitive perspective, the conceptual framework of motivation underpinning this study acknowledges student motivation to be a dynamic

process where a range of cognitive mediators and contextual factors may constantly interact to influence behaviour. This study explores the potentially complex and multiple interactions between the cognitive mediators of task values, self-concept, self-efficacy and causal attributions together with student perceptions of the contextual factors of school culture, peer group influences, family values and perceptions of teachers as interacting factors that shape student motivation to participate in the classroom music curriculum.

2.3 Theories of motivation

Research in motivation over the past twenty years has been characterised by a consistent focus on the cognitive mediators linked to an individual's beliefs, values and goals (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). While a coherence between the key motivational factors published in earlier works (Ames & Ames, 1984; Thomas, 1992) and those published more recently (O'Neill & McPherson, 2002; Sansome & Harackiewicz, 2000; Wigfield, Eccles & Rodriguez, 1997), is evident, a distinguishing factor in recent educational research has been a growing recognition of the role of the learning environment on student academic motivation.

Cognitive developmental theories developed during the 1980s recognised that psychological traits and characteristics unique to each student were influential in a student's motivation orientation. These psychological traits included personality and the role of emotion (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Kemp, 1997). More recent social-cognitive research, however, argues that a student's academic motivation is influenced by the context in which the student is situated, together with an individual's psychological traits. This research has placed features of the learning

environment or classroom factors at the centre of much of the work exploring student academic motivation (Turner & Meyer, 1999; Urdan, 1999).

Of fundamental significance in the shift to a social-cognitive perspective has been the move away from a mechanistic view of motivation where 'needs' and 'drives' (Maslow, 1968) were understood to act as the source of motivation. Research in motivation is now concerned with cognitive mediators related to how the individual perceives a situation, interprets events within the situation and acts upon these interpretations (Cole & Chan, 1990). Contextual factors have been identified as having a significant influence on student perceptions and interpretations, shaping the individual's perceptions, beliefs, and values (Anderman & Maehr, 1994).

Eccles and Wigfield (2002) grouped the range of cognitive mediational processes influencing student motivation according to theories related to task valuing, expectations, the integration of expectancies and values, and social cognitive theories of motivation. Consistent with Eccles and Wigfield's (2002) four broad motivational categories, the review of motivational theories presented in this chapter will explore social-cognitive approaches to student motivation according to task values, self-concept, self-efficacy, attribution theory and goals. Section 2.4 provides a review of literature pertaining to the key contextual factors of school culture, peer group influences, family values and perceptions of teachers.

2.3.1 Task values

Task values refer to constructs including personal interest, importance, and utility value. In an educational context, a student may value the participation in, and

successful completion of, an academic task or curriculum area as it reflects personal values. For example, a student may value the intrinsic pleasure gained from participating in music activities or believe 'non-core' academic subjects to be important in a full and broad education. Alternatively, a student who possesses a utility value towards an academic task or curriculum area participates to satisfy short or long term goals related to future applications, such as tertiary entrance requirements, career aspirations or lifestyle considerations (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995; Eccles *et al.*, 1993).

Task values are an important determinant of academic motivation as the influence of academic self-concept on motivation is mediated by the individual's value for particular curriculum areas or academic tasks (Vispoel & Austin, 2000). The positive relationship between task values and expectancy outcomes based on broad beliefs of competence, including both domain specific academic self-concept and self-efficacy, have been identified in modern expectancy-value theories of motivation (Eccles *et al.*, 1983; Wigfield & Eccles, 2001). In this theory, the relative value and probability of success for a particular task are considered key determinants of student motivation to engage in the task. The value placed on an academic task or curriculum area can often be reflected in the effort, social behaviour and work habits demonstrated by the student. While task values are related to competence beliefs, recent research (Marsh, Craven & Debus, 1999; Wigfield *et al.*, 1997) has demonstrated that they are quite distinct constructs. A student may value or possess an interest in music yet hold low self-perceptions of ability within this subject area. Conversely, a student may have high self-perceptions of ability in music yet hold little interest or task value in music.

In a three-year longitudinal study of self-regulation in children's musical practice, McPherson and Renwick (2001) found the level of student utility task values for instrumental music for longer-term future career related goals to be limited despite an intrinsic interest in music. Student expectations and values appeared to be related to levels of performance for many of the 133 students, aged seven to nine, in the earlier stages of instrumental music tuition (McPherson & Zimmerman, 2002, p. 133). Students who valued music for long-term future goals were found to perform at higher levels than those students who held only a short to medium-term commitment to music, irrespective of effort. While these findings were related to instrumental music, the findings reinforced the role of situation-specific cognitions and evaluations in predicting student intentions and achievement.

There is a paucity of research in the area of student task values as they relate to classroom music with the limited evidence available indicating music not to be held in the same esteem as many other curriculum areas (Mills, 1997; Swanwick & Lawson, 1999; Ross & Kamba, 1997). Wigfield and colleagues (1991) investigated the development of student task values for European-American students from lower middle to middle class backgrounds during the transition from Year Six, the last year of elementary school, to Year Seven, the first year of junior high school. Findings from this study revealed student task values for mathematics, reading, and instrumental music to decline while interest in sport increased. Students described reading and mathematics as the most useful curriculum area and music to be the least useful. The diminishing student task values for music across the educational transition between primary and secondary schooling were confirmed in a large-scale study in the United Kingdom (O'Neill *et al.*, 2002).

O'Neill and colleagues (2002) investigated student task values for instrumental music as part of the overall aim of exploring the factors likely to influence student decisions to engage or disengage with musical activities. Findings from this study revealed task values and competence beliefs to be independent predictors of student involvement in music in secondary school music. Further analysis revealed that whilst both girls' and boys' ratings of music task value declined following the transition to secondary school, girls' ratings of intrinsic task value and level of importance for instrumental music were significantly higher than boys' ratings. Further evidence of differences between girls' and boys' task values has been found to exist with boys, in general, rating sport higher on measures of importance and interest, while girls rate reading and music as more interesting and important (Eccles *et al.*, 1993; Wigfield & Eccles, 1994; Wigfield *et al.*, 1997). Marsh, Eccles, and their colleagues (Eccles *et al.*, 1989; Marsh *et al.*, 1998) have suggested these differences in task values reflect cultural influences and gender stereotypes.

One explanation for the low rating of school music by students entering the secondary school may be the disparity between the musical preferences of adolescent students and the classroom music curriculum offered in secondary schools (Hargreaves, Comber & Colley, 1995; Lamont *et al.*, 2003). Music has been strongly linked to an individual's sense of identity (Hargreaves, Miell & MacDonald, 2002; Hargreaves & North, 1999) and is described as the primary leisure activity of adolescents (Fitzgerald *et al.*, 1995; Zillmann & Gan, 1997). Despite the high levels of personal interest and engagement in music in the lives of early adolescents, secondary school students

appear to become progressively disenchanted with classroom music (Gammon, 1996; Mills, 1997; Ross, 1995, 1998).

Lamont and colleagues (2003) suggest the role and importance of music for teenagers outside of the school context are important factors influencing the popularity and effectiveness of school based music activities. An examination of the nature of adolescent musical engagement outside of the school context clearly illustrates a declining interest in a broad range of musical styles and a significant increase in preference towards the popular music styles of rock and pop (Hargreaves, Comber & Colley, 1995). This narrowing of musical preferences and declining interest in school based music activities, at a time when music is considered as "a vitally important part of the lives of most teenagers" (North, Hargreaves & O'Neill, 2000, p. 256) demands a focus on the differences between the function of secondary school music experiences and the function of music in the lives of adolescent students outside of the school context (Lamont *et al.*, 2003).

Stalhammer (2003) offered some insight into the function of music in the life of adolescents in a study of young people's musical experience. In this study of six English and six Swedish fifteen year old students, adults were described as emphasising technical knowledge, such as reading music notation and performance skills, while adolescent musical values were related to relaxation, community and life-style. Further, adults were perceived to hold less value for musical experiences that occurred outside of the school context, regardless of the level of commitment to, or knowledge of, this music. While the experiences and knowledge of music in the life

of adolescents' can possess great value within an individual's peer group, it appeared to hold little value beyond it.

In an attempt to address low student values for secondary school music, curriculum reform efforts have acknowledged the need to diversify the music styles covered in classroom music programs to include popular forms of music (for example, Department for Education (England), 1995; Board of Studies NSW (Australia), 1994). The increased recognition of the role of popular music in the classroom music curriculum has been supported by increasingly positive attitudes towards popular music as a component of the classroom music curriculum (Green, 2002). Despite attempts to modernise the music curriculum, "a widespread perception of a problem with school music, particularly at secondary level" (Lamont *et al.*, 2003, p. 229) remains. One explanation for the continued low student values for school music relates to traditional teaching strategies based on music-making according to a 'professional' career model (Green, 2002). Teachers who themselves have been trained within the Western classical tradition have persisted with traditional teaching methods (Hargreaves *et al.*, 2003) that may not reflect the nature of adolescent music making in out-of-school contexts. The distinction between in-school and out-of-school music contexts is further highlighted in a recent study by Boal-Palheiros and Hargreaves (2001), where secondary school students described the purpose of school based music listening experiences to be the acquisition of knowledge while out-of-school music listening experiences were described as satisfying feelings of enjoyment and positive emotional moods.

Similar disparities between school and out-of-school music can be found in adolescent's engagement in music-making activities. North, Hargreaves and O'Neill (2000), in their study of the importance of music in the lives of 2465 adolescents, found the function of music for secondary school students to differ according to musical style. Students reported reasons for performing popular music in out-of-school contexts to include enjoyment, creativity, self-expression, and identity within the peer group. In contrast, the performance of classical music was for the purpose of pleasing parents and teachers. Cope and Smith (1997) suggest school based instrumental music tuition to be influenced by the school ensemble music program with students encouraged to learn instruments that are lacking in the school orchestra or concert band. Cope and Smith (1997) offer the example of the oboe as an instrument students are encouraged to learn while at school, that is of little cultural significance outside of school. School based instrumental music experiences that are inconsistent with the function of music in the lives of adolescents outside of school may not be culturally relevant, fostering low task values for school music.

In summary, student task values have been demonstrated to be a major determinant of task engagement. A general decline in both intrinsic and utility task values for school based music activities is reported to occur in the later years of elementary or primary schooling and continues across the educational transition between primary and secondary schooling. This decline in task values for school based music activities occurs at a time when music is a primary leisure activity of adolescents and has been strongly linked to an individual's developing sense of identity. The disparity between the high levels of personal interest and engagement in music outside of school and the declining interest in school music suggests the function of school based music experiences to be inconsistent with the function of music in the lives of adolescents.

2.3.2 Self-concept

Shavleson, Hubner and Stanton (1976) defined self-concept as an individual's self-perceptions based on interpretations of experiences within the individual's environment. In addition to individual interpretations of previous academic accomplishments, evaluations by significant others, previous academic accomplishments, and attributions for one's behaviour have particular influence on the formation of the individual's self-perceptions.

Theories related to self-concept have enjoyed considerable attention among educational researchers in student motivation over the past twenty years. Much of this interest has developed from the belief that academic self-concept has motivational properties, such that academic self-concept can affect academic choices, educational aspirations, effort expenditure, persistence, and subsequent academic achievement (Byrne, 1984; Marsh & Craven, 1997). Researchers have suggested that higher levels of student academic self-concept in any given area within the school curriculum will lead to higher participation rates in that same curriculum area (Marsh & Yeung, 1997b).

Theoretical views of self-concept distinguish between whether it is viewed as a global characteristic or as a set of self-evaluations specific to different domains. The global view has the longer history and featured prominently in much of the earlier research, remaining a popular conceptual framework for research in self-concept into the early 1990s (Strein, 1993). Over the past twenty years, however, there has emerged extensive empirical research which supports the premise that self-concept is a multidimensional construct (Bracken, 1992; Marsh & Hattie, 1996; Vispoel, 1995).

This contemporary multidimensional view of self-concept supports the notion of sub-areas of self-concept where an individual may hold positive self-perceptions in some areas (for example, social or academic) and negative self-perceptions in other areas (for example, physical appearance or athletic ability). Within each broad domain an individual may differentiate further levels of self-perception. For example, within the academic domain a student may perceive different levels of competence between mathematics and music. Consequently, the student's cognitive self-perceptions of competence for each specific domain may differ according to the nature of domain specific experiences.

In the formation of a student's self-concept, social interactions serve as a fundamental source of competence information. A student's comparison with others provides normative information from which assessments of personal skills and interests can be made (Wigfield & Karpathian, 1991). As students compare themselves with others they set standards or frames of reference that act as powerful influences on their motivational orientations. Marsh (1984; 1991; Marsh & Parker, 1984) proposed a frames of reference model for domain specific academic self-concept called the *big-fish-little-pond-effect* that revisited 'social comparison' theory first introduced by Festinger (1954). In this theoretical model, Marsh suggests that students compare their own academic abilities with those of their peers and that this social comparison acts as a significant factor in the formation of the individual's academic self-concept. A negative academic self-concept would develop when comparisons of personal academic abilities are made with students perceived to be more able, while the same student comparing personal academic abilities with students perceived to be less able would develop a positive academic self-concept. The *big-fish-little-pond-effect* has

significant implications in school settings, particularly on student motivation when classes are grouped according to academic ability, or students are grouped within a single class.

According to the educational research conducted by Marsh and colleagues (Marsh, 1984; Marsh & Craven, 2000), a student's academic self-concept cannot be understood without attention to the frames of reference or standards of comparison used by individuals when assessing personal levels of competence. Student academic self-concept is, therefore, not based solely on academic achievements but equally on the comparison of academic achievements with peers.

In a classroom music context, the social comparisons that occur between students in a non-elective classroom music program may have a significant influence on the development of the individual's music self-concept. For example, a student who possesses some aptitude for music and who attends a school or a particular music class where there are a number of students who have benefited from greater musical opportunities or who have achieved higher external examination results, may compare himself less favourably with his peers. This less-favourable comparison is likely to result in the development of a diminished music self-concept. Conversely, the same student attending the same school or music class is likely to develop a positive music self-concept when personal perceptions of musical ability compare favourably with peers who are perceived to have a lower aptitude or achievement in music. According to the *big-fish-little-pond-effect,* music self-concept is established relative to social comparisons of perceived musical ability and not absolute measures of musical competence.

Underpinning Marsh's *big-fish-little-pond-effect* is a performance goal orientation where the emphasis is on "out performing others as a means to aggrandize one's ability status at the expense of peers" (Covington, 2000, p. 174). A performance goal orientation discourages the acceptance of challenge or risk-taking, as students fear an unfavourable judgment of ability based on an unsuccessful performance. Students who doubt their ability to achieve a successful outcome may elect to avoid the task in an attempt to minimise negative evaluations of competence (Dweck, 1999). Further to Marsh's *big-fish-little-pond-effect*, Gross (1998) found students placed in a specialised environment for accelerated learning did not demonstrate a decline in academic self-esteem based solely on social comparisons with equally or more able peers. Rather, Gross found differences in goal orientation to be a contributing factor as students with performance orientated goals were more vulnerable to declining academic self-esteem as a result of unfavourable social comparisons, as compared to students with task orientated goals. This finding supports more recent achievement goal theories (Ames, 1992; Urdan, 1997) where evidence suggests students with mastery goal orientations engage more in self-regulated learning (Pintrich & Schrauben, 1992) demonstrating greater effort and positive, adaptive attributions for achievement. In a mastery goal orientation, a poor performance relative to peers is not necessarily attributed to incompetence, rather, the poor performance is likely to be attributed to other factors such as a poor learning strategy (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996).

It has been widely accepted that a positive academic self-concept, in general, optimises the personal and social resources brought to the classroom by the student (Brewer, 1991; Oppenheimer & Valsiner, 1991). Further, educational researchers

have found a student's domain specific academic self-concept influences task persistence, engagement, future career choice, and further studies in areas related to the specific domain (Meece, Wigfield & Eccles, 1993; Stipek, 1993; Weiner, 1986). Meece, Wigfield and Eccles (1990), in their study of adolescents' intentions and choices in mathematics, found that mathematic self-concept influenced student enrolment behaviour in further studies of mathematics. Consistent with the findings of Meece, Wigfield and Eccles (1990), Marsh and Yeung (1997a; 1997b) found students with a higher academic self-concept in particular school subjects have an increased likelihood of taking more advanced coursework in those same subjects. While much of the recent academic self-concept research has been limited to number, reading and writing activities, the theoretical explanations offered within the respective domains highlight domain specific links between a student's sense of competence and preferences among academic activities. This link between a student's sense of competence and task choice supports the expectancy-value model of educational choice demonstrated by Eccles (1983) as student perceptions of competence influence outcome expectancies in future related tasks.

The theoretical explanations relating domain specific academic self-concept to task choice have significant implications within the field of music education. A positive music self-concept is likely to enhance student motivation to engage in the music curriculum and participate in further music studies (Klinedinst, 1991). In the following section I discuss the relationship between music self-concept and student engagement in music activities.

2.3.2.1 Music self-concept

In one of the earliest studies exploring music self-concept as a factor influencing student participation in music, McLendon (1982) found ample anecdotal evidence supporting the correlation between poor music self-concept and poor levels of participation in music activities. McLendon's study traced the antecedents of low music self-concepts in adults to early negative childhood experiences at school. Examples included children being asked not to sing in the choir for the benefit of the ensemble rather than the individual. Klinedinst (1991) examined the capacity of eleven factors to predict achievement and retention with 205 fifth grade beginning instrumental music students. Findings from this study revealed higher levels of music self-concept, along with higher family socio-economic status and scholastic ability, were valid predictors of increased student retention in the instrumental music program.

Austin (1990) examined the relationship between student self-perceptions of musical ability and the level of student participation in school based music activities in a study involving 252 fifth and sixth grade students. From data gathered through the Self-Esteem of Music Ability scale (Schmitt, 1979) where music self-esteem is measured according to the three factors of perceived ability, desire to be a musician, and recognition from others, Austin found that music self-esteem scores proved to be significant predictors of participation in school instrumental music activities and out-of-school music activities. Austin acknowledged, however, that while the correlation between music self-esteem and the level of participation in music activities was statistically significant, the degree of variance was relatively small. Austin recommended future research address other predictor variables including home music

environment, musical aptitude and music achievement. Findings from Austin's study revealed differences in student self-perceptions of musical ability to be related to gender. Male students were found to have significantly lower measures of music self-esteem than female students. The nature of the differences in the music self-esteem measures was not clarified as this lay beyond the scope of this exploratory study. Austin suggested, however, that the differences "may reflect sociocultural stereotyping or even bias in teacher expectations" (Austin, 1990, p. 28). Marsh and colleagues (Marsh *et al.*, 1988; Marsh, 1989) offered similar explanations for differences in self-concept measures between male and female students with socialisation patterns and gender stereotyping being reported as the likely causes of differences.

Certainly, differences in attitudes towards music, musical preferences and preferred instrument have been found to exist between boys and girls (Harrison & O'Neill, 2000). Early studies focused on gender-stereotyping as a factor influencing student participation in instrumental music with evidence found to support the presence of gender-stereotyping in children above third grade in the USA (Abeles & Porter, 1978; Delzell & Leppla, 1992; Fortney, Boyle, & De Carbo, 1993). Gender-stereotyping in music served to constrict student behaviour by "limit[ing] the range of musical experiences available to male and female students in several ways, including participation in instrumental ensembles and selection of vocations in instrumental music" (Abeles & Porter, 1978, p. 65). O'Neill (1997) presents an overview of research related to gender issues in music and highlights the pervasive role of gender stereotyped beliefs in society. Despite O'Neill finding no evidence of differences between boys' and girls' levels of musical aptitude, "more girls than boys [were]

involved in, and successful at, musical activities at school" (O'Neill, 1997, p. 49). The implications of socially ingrained gender roles in music are considerable as Green (1993) suggests only the most motivated boys are likely to pursue elective music studies. The social cost of participating in a subject perceived to be 'feminine', may be too high for less musically motivated students. In the Australian context, Fullerton and Ainley's (2000) study of 7500 secondary students found gender to account for the greatest variation in student enrolments, with almost twice the number of girls than boys electing to participate in the key learning area of the Arts. In this study, music was one of seven subjects (Art, Music, Dance, Drama, Theatre Studies, Graphic Communication, and Media Studies) included under the Arts key learning area. Consistent with more recent research into gender as a factor influencing student motivation to participate in music activities (Adler, 1999), this study will explore the key contextual elements of school culture, peer group and family values to establish if socialization processes promote perceptions of gender appropriate activities in students.

While educational research continues to demonstrate the contribution of domain specific academic self-concept on student coursework selection (Marsh & Yeung, 1997), Eccles and colleagues (1983) found self-concept to also have an indirect influence on student enrolment behaviour through a mediating effect on achievement expectations. Consistent with social-cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986; 1998), individuals perform behaviours that are anticipated to produce positive outcomes. The confidence in personal ability to perform a task is represented by the construct of self-efficacy. The growing body of motivation research in the field of music education has

focused on self-efficacy, expanding understanding of student self-perceptions of music ability as a factor in music curriculum choice.

2.3.3 Self-efficacy

While self-efficacy and self-concept are related, distinct differences exist between the two constructs (Pajares & Miller, 1994). Self-concept has been defined as a perception of personal ability in a particular domain (Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976) based on external frames of reference through social comparisons and internal frames of reference according to comparisons between performances in particular school subjects (Marsh, Walker, & Debus, 1991). Bandura (1986) defined self-efficacy as the individual's perceptions of ability to perform a particular action or behaviour that may produce a successful outcome. Within Bandura's self-efficacy theory, a distinction is made between two types of expectancy beliefs: outcome expectancies related to beliefs about the behaviour required to produce the desired outcome; and efficacy expectations related to the individual's perceptions of personal ability to perform the behaviour required to produce the desired outcome (Bandura, 1997). As expectancy beliefs are tied to particular tasks, the frames of reference used to establish self-efficacy are related to a criterion reference implicit in the task under consideration (Marsh *et al.*, 1991).

Through an extensive series of studies, Bandura (1977; 1986; 1997) was able to demonstrate the predictive nature of self-efficacy, as it served as a primary determinant of action and behaviour through effects on outcome expectancy for particular levels of achievement in specific tasks and contexts. Self-efficacy beliefs are formed on the basis of four informational sources: performance accomplishments

based on related tasks, vicarious experience where judgements are made through social comparison, feedback from teachers and adults, and physiological and affective states (Bandura, 1977, 1986). The behavioural consequences have been described as including task persistence, goal setting, intensity of performance (Williams & Lillibridge, 1992), acceptance of challenging tasks (Schunk, 1995), choice of activities, and effort expenditure (Bandura *et al.*, 2001).

The implications of self-efficacy in student music elective curriculum choice are considerable as self-efficacy is a cognitive construction that influences performance expectations (Bandura, 1986). Where student perceptions of personal capabilities to organise and perform tasks involved in an elective classroom music curriculum are high, self-efficacy may contribute positively to student decisions to participate in the elective music curriculum. Conversely, low self-efficacy diminishes student motivation to participate in the elective music curriculum as a result of low performance expectations.

The individual's development of self-efficacy during adolescence occurs at a time where the primary developmental task for the individual is the development of a differentiated and integrated self. It is a time when students set and plan personal goals while balancing them with the social goals of acceptance, assimilation and integration (Lerner, 1987). The achievement of these social goals involves peer mediated behavioural prescriptions and restrictions in order to assimilate with a student's peer group. It involves the acceptance of certain social norms in order to achieve particular social roles and positions (Zhang & Hexmoor, 2003). The need to

integrate socially places limitations on the individual's autonomy with personal goals being compromised or amended to satisfy the individual's social needs.

In a school context, a student may have aspirations to pursue music studies to satisfy an intrinsic interest in music or a longer-term personal goal related to music performance in a professional post secondary school setting. The need to satisfy social goals, however, may place limitations on the student's enrolment behaviour as peer group values may be inconsistent with personal musical goals.

While performance accomplishments are significant in the individual's development of self-efficacy, the reduction of task difficulty for the purposes of increasing the likelihood of successful learning experiences can be detrimental. Bandura (1986) warns against this strategy as task persistence is the result of high self-efficacy which is enhanced through the attainment, rather than the elimination, of appropriately challenging tasks. The selection of self-efficacy enhancing activities based on appropriately challenging tasks is consistent with Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) 'flow' theory, discussed below, highlighting the role of contextual factors in the formation of individuals' cognitive mediators used in the development of a motivational orientation.

Teacher feedback that is constructive and advises students as to the cause of success or failure for a specific task provides useful cognitive information that encourages perseverance in future tasks. Students with a low self-efficacy are vulnerable to negative feedback and in cases where feedback is limited to the reporting of levels of

achievement, students become increasingly reluctant to tackle challenging tasks within the same academic domain in the future (Bruning, Schraw & Ronning, 1995).

Despite self-efficacy featuring prominently in recent studies exploring cognitive mediational processes as factors shaping student motivation in a range of educational contexts, there has been little research within the field of music education that has focused specifically on self-efficacy as a factor in student enrolment behaviour (McCormick & McPherson, 2003). Recent studies by McPherson and McCormick (1999; 2003), however, make an important contribution to the study of self-efficacy within the field of music education through an investigation into self-efficacy as a predictor of achievement levels in performance music.

In McCormick and McPherson's (2003) study of 332 instrumentalists between the ages of nine and eighteen years, student self-efficacy was found to have a strong association with the level of performance achieved in the external graded music examinations of the Trinity College, London. These findings suggest self-efficacy to be a predictor of student success in instrumental music performance examination contexts, confirming the relationship between self-efficacy and levels of student performance established in other academic domains (Pajares & Valiante, 1999; Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990; Schunk & Swartz, 1993; Zimmerman, 2000). With self-efficacy having been identified as significant in student motivation to persist with tasks (Pajares, 1996), the implications of McPherson's and McCormick's (1999, 2003) recent studies are that findings related to self-efficacy and student motivation in broader educational contexts may offer important insights into student enrolment behaviour in music education contexts. These findings highlight the need for further

research to be conducted in self-efficacy within the field of music education and offer important directions for future research in school contexts.

The underlying assumption of self-efficacy constructs is that student success is determined, in part, by perceptions of personal capabilities to perform an action or behaviour. Closely linked to outcome expectancies are student attributions for the causes of situational outcomes, and the level of control the student holds over the perceived causal attributes. In Section 2.3.4, I outline the influence of student attributions as factors influencing student perceptions of personal ability to accomplish a task and the role of student perceptions of causality as factors influencing motivation.

2.3.4 Attribution theory

Attribution theory is concerned with what the individual student understands to be the cause of success or failure in any given task, with the student's perception of causality influencing motivation towards particular educational experiences (Weiner, 1974). The causal dimensions considered to influence a student's judgement of why a particular event was successful, or otherwise, can be grouped according to a locus of control dimension: internal or external. Internal causal attributes relate directly to the student while external causal attributes relate to the learning environment or any related contextual factors.

Within each locus of control, attributions are viewed as either stable or unstable. Stable attributions represent those tasks where individuals perceive the cause of success to be fixed and unlikely to change with repeated attempts in future task

engagements. For example, a stable attribute, such as ability, is not easily changed making future attempts at similar tasks likely to produce similar outcomes. Unstable attributions represent those tasks where outcomes are perceived to vary according to factors that may be controlled. An example of an unstable attribution is effort, as the individual is able to change the amount of effort exerted in a particular task, which in turn, may bring about a different outcome in future related tasks. Weiner's (1974, p. 52) two-dimensional taxonomy of attribution has informed much of the educational research in student attribution over the past three decades and is summarised according to the 2 x 2 classification scheme illustrated in Table 2.1.

	Locus of Control	
Stability	**Internal**	**External**
Stable	Ability	Task difficulty
Unstable	Effort	Luck

Table 2.1: Classification scheme for perceived causal attributions (Weiner, 1974)

Much of the research into secondary school students' motivation to study music has been based around the principles of attribution theory as it is closely related to student expectancy. Student perceptions of the causes of a successful outcome, or otherwise, in a specific task is a major determinant of expectancy for future success or failure in similar tasks (Miltiadou & Savenye, 2003). For example, students who attribute previous success in classroom music activities to effort, such as the revision or rehearsal of key concepts covered in class, may be more motivated to continue participating in classroom music as the amount of effort expended is unstable and can be controlled by the individual, enabling the student to enhance the likelihood of

continued success in future tasks. Alternatively, it is less likely that students will maintain motivation to persist in classroom music tasks when students perceive little control over the ability to avoid failure or promote success in future tasks. For example, a history of failure in the classroom music curriculum that is attributed to factors that cannot be controlled by the student and are stable, such as task difficulty, is likely to diminish student motivation in future related tasks.

Having found sixth-grade classroom music students attributed success and failure in music to the internal attributions of effort and ability (Asmus, 1985), Asmus expanded his study of student attribution to include high school students (1986). The findings from the 1986 study supported previous findings (Asmus, 1985) with eighty percent of students attributing the causes of success and failure in music to the internal attributes of effort and ability. Significantly, Asmus (1986) found that as students became older they shifted in their attribution for success or failure in music from effort to ability and that this shift occurred during grades six and seven. Support for a shift in student attribution for success in music was also found with band students in two independent studies (Arnold, 1997; Austin, 1988). The shift in student attribution is particularly significant in the Australian NSW context as it marks a period when students are making the transition from primary school to secondary school and nearing the completion of their mandatory music education. With internal-unstable causes, such as effort, promoting task persistence in future related tasks and internal-stable attributions of ability not promoting task persistence (Asmus, 1986; Austin & Vispoel, 1992), a shift to ability attributions may result in reduced student numbers engaging in the music curriculum beyond the mandatory music course of Year Eight.

It should be noted that Asmus and colleagues (Asmus & Harrison, 1990; Harrison, Asmus & Serpe, 1994) found musical aptitude, an area believed to be significant in a student's assessment of likely success or failure in a musical task and retention in music, was not significant in influencing student motivation to study music. This finding is consistent with other studies (Nierman & Veak, 1997; Pogonowski, 1985) that indicated a "lack of a significant relationship between musical aptitude scores and musical attitude ... which indicated that classroom music attitudes and musical aptitude are essentially unrelated" (Nierman & Veak, 1997, p. 386). These findings suggest musical aptitude may represent only a minor factor in student attribution and may not provide sufficient motivation to change actual behaviour.

In a more recent study, Legette (1998) investigated the shift in student attribution for success in music tasks from effort to ability by exploring the attributes of 595 junior, 319 middle, and 199 senior school students. While the findings from this study were consistent with the body of research indicating student perceptions of attribution for success or failure in musical tasks to be primarily ability and effort (Asmus, 1995; Austin & Vispoel, 1998; McPherson & McCormick, 2000; Schmidt, 1995), the results from the Legette study (1998) questioned previous findings. Legette (1998) found that students in the junior school attributed success, or otherwise, in musical tasks to ability and not effort as proposed by Asmus (1986). This disparity may well be explained by differences in classroom goal orientations between the two studies.

In a study of 176 students attending a junior high school, Ames and Archer (1988) found students who perceived an emphasis on mastery goals in the classroom attributed success to effort while students who perceived the classroom environment

to emphasise performance goals were more likely to attribute success to ability. The conflicting results between the Legette (1998) study and the earlier Asmus (1986) study suggest greater clarity is needed concerning student perceptions of classroom goal orientations within each study before an account for the different student attributions in the junior school setting can be made.

In addition to potential attribution differences with age, Legette (1993) found differences in student attribution existed with gender. Legette found girls in grades three and four attributed success in musical tasks to effort more so than boys. While this study was limited to two demographically similar schools, other studies have found support for gender differences and attributions for success. Schmidt (1995) found differences in gender mediated student perceptions of teacher feedback, with boys in Years Ten to Twelve rating negative teacher feedback higher than girls as an attribution for failure in choral music, while girls rated positive teacher feedback higher as an attribution for success in choral music. Asmus (1986) found that differences in attributions for success in musical activities also existed according to gender with female students attributing ability more often while males attributed effort as the cause of success in music. This finding highlights boys' attributions for success in music to be contrary to general attribution findings where a shift has been found to occur from effort to ability as students become older. Asmus (1986) suggested that one explanation for the difference in gender attributions was that they might reflect societal values where ability in music is more culturally acceptable for female than male students. The findings, while of contrasting student samples, highlight the potential for differences between gender and attribution. Investigations

into attribution differences according to gender in music education are limited, and the above studies offer some preliminary directions for future research in the area.

Student beliefs regarding the causes of success and failure in music have been identified as deriving from five primary causal categories: effort, musical ability, musical background, classroom environment, and affect for music (Asmus, 1986). Of these casual categories, internal causes of effort and ability are most often attributed to successful music experiences while external causes, such as task difficulty, luck and assistance from others, are attributed to unsuccessful music experiences (Asmus, 1985; Austin, 1991; Austin & Vispoel, 1992; Chandler, Chiarella & Auria, 1987; Legette, 1998). While much of the research in student attribution within music education replicates findings in other academic domains, the two primary causal categories of background and affect, identified by Asmus (1986), appear unique to music. Thomas (1992) suggests that this requires further research to acknowledge the unique nature of music learning in the school curriculum and the social contexts in which music is engaged. She calls for research in student motivation in music to adopt a two-part strategy that explores both the developmental and contextual factors.

> That music is a performance art means also that the social context is an especially powerful factor underlying the learning process and the defining of student goals. Cooperative efforts among students, the student teacher relationship, and very often the parent-child collaboration take on a special salience beyond that present in most other areas of learning. (Thomas, 1992, p. 429)

McPherson and McCormick (2000) surveyed 349 instrumental music students immediately before entering a Trinity College, London, performance examination in Australia. The study sought to identify both the nature of student attributions for success by specifically investigating the strength of internal and external attributions, and the range of motivational influences that may predict student levels of achievement. McPherson and McCormick (2000) found that over 50% of students attributed success to the internal, unstable attributes of effort – both in the preparation for the examination and during the examination. This finding is consistent with a number of related studies in music education (Asmus, 1985; Schmidt, 1995) where the internal attributes of effort and ability have been found to be significant predictors of success. The findings also confirmed the role of additional causal attributions (Asmus, 1986; Austin & Vispoel, 1998; Thomas, 1992) beyond the traditional two-dimensional model (Weiner, 1979), with nervousness during the performance examination identified as the second most influential factor behind effort, both in the preparation for the examination and the level of application during the examination.

Austin and Vispoel (1998) suggest the most salient reasons for music related outcomes are related to the socio-cultural influences of family, teacher and peer group factors and that these factors have not been addressed in traditional attribution research. In their study of 153 seventh grade students, average age twelve years, Austin and Vispoel (1998) expanded the set of traditional attributions of ability, effort, task difficulty and luck to include the non-traditional attributions of: persistence; strategy use; metacognition; interest; family influence; teacher influence; and peer influence. The findings of this study revealed student attribution beliefs for music extend beyond the four traditional factors and that these traditional attributes

appear to operate differently in school music settings when compared to other achievement domains. Data revealed attribution beliefs to have strong linkages with music self-concept and achievement levels in classroom music. Those students with higher music self-concept and achievement levels did not attribute success and failure to the same causal factors as students with lower music self-concepts and achievement levels. The group of students with higher music self-concepts tended to attribute success in music to ability and family influence and was less inclined to attribute failure to these same factors. From this finding, Austin and Vispoel (1998, p. 40) confirmed the importance of teachers minimising the salience of ability differences among students while promoting effort and strategy use attributes as an intervention strategy for students who have experienced failure in classroom music.

In a study of 120 secondary choral students, Schmidt (1995) found that there were no significant differences in student attributions for success in choral music according to age. This is contrary to findings in other music domains (Asmus, 1986; McPherson & McCormick, 2000) and highlights the need for research to be conducted investigating the relationship between a student's causal attribution and a range of other factors including age, performance proficiency, and music domain, (for example, instrumental, choral, ensemble and classroom music). Differences in student attributions, according to contextual, personal or musical factors present significant implications for the teaching of classroom music. Teachers communicate a range of attitudes concerning whether ability is fixed or modifiable and their expectations for individual students through their instructional practices (Graham, 1990). The potential for teachers' instructional practices to shape students' beliefs about the causes of

success and failure in classroom activities may also influence student motivation to persist with musical activities in the future.

Research related to teacher instructional practices has lead to the identification of teacher intervention strategies intended to enhance student motivation. These intervention strategies have been described as either direct, through praise and positive performance feedback, or indirect involving attempts to change student causal attribution and self-efficacy beliefs (Marsh & Craven, 1997). Teacher praise and positive performance feedback are intended to promote a sense of competence within the subject area that in turn leads to enhanced self-concept and self-efficacy beliefs. Indirect intervention strategies focus on the attribution style or self-efficacy beliefs of the student.

Attribution retraining (Craven, Marsh & Debus, 1991) is a relatively common intervention strategy designed to enhance achievement motivation through higher levels of academic self-concept and self-efficacy. The three causal dimensions of locus, stability, and control are employed in teacher feedback to promote expectancy change. It involves teachers promoting internal unstable causal attributions, such as effort, to account for successful experiences with the selection of learning activities focused on mastery goals where teacher feedback serves to improve future performance (Thompson, 1994). While attribution retraining is endorsed as an appropriate teacher intervention strategy for task persistence following student failure in music (Austin & Vispoel, 1998), it is important to recognise that this strategy may be more appropriate for students with low to moderate self-perceptions of musical ability. In both Csikszentmihalyi's 'flow' theory (1990) and Bandura's motivational

theory of self-efficacy (1986), teacher feedback on student skills may be more closely linked to self-efficacy than information about effort. The acceptance of challenge in learning tasks by students, in part, is based on the appropriate balance between the skills and past musical experiences of the student and those skills and experiences needed to complete the task successfully. Those students who possess the skills and previous musical experiences necessary, for example, should be reminded that success in the learning tasks is not limited to effort attributes alone.

2.3.5 Goal theory

Goal theory is concerned with the values students place on their schooling and the purposes students perceive for learning in achievement situations (Ames, 1992; Maehr & Midgley, 1991; Midgley, 1993). The cognitive representations of the different purposes for learning are consistent with the social-cognitive theories of motivation and have become a feature in much of the motivation literature. Goals are viewed as organising and directing behaviour as they address the basic question: why am I doing this task? (Pintrich & Scrauben, 1992). While different researchers define the constructs slightly differently, two main goal orientations are generally discussed, those of a task goal orientation, also referred to as a mastery goal orientation, and an ability or performance goal orientation.

A task goal involves an intrinsic motivation orientation where the purpose of achieving is personal improvement and understanding of the learning task (Meece & Holt, 1993). Students with a task goal orientation have positive attitudes towards learning (Ames & Archer, 1987) and believe that effort will lead to success (Ames,

1992b). With the focus on mastering skills and knowledge, students gain intrinsic pleasure from the achievement of challenging tasks that encourage risk taking. This has been demonstrated through greater task persistence (Dweck, 1986; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Success is defined according to the student's sense of accomplishment based on 'self' referenced standards.

An ability goal orientation (Urdan & Maehr, 1995) represents the belief that the purpose of achieving is the demonstration of ability (or, alternatively, the concealment of a lack of ability). Students with an ability goal orientation focus on appearing competent relative to others and define success accordingly. This typically is referenced according to external criteria such as public recognition, rewards, and approval from others for surpassing norms and achieving success with little effort. Students with an ability goal orientation determine their own 'self-worth' according to personal achievement levels in external performance tasks. Studies of student goal orientations have generally found that the adoption of task goals is associated with more adaptive patterns of learning than is the adoption of ability goals. Associated with the adoption of task goals is the use of more effective cognitive strategies, a willingness to seek help when it is needed, a greater tendency to engage in challenging tasks, and more positive feelings about school and oneself as a learner (Anderman & Maehr, 1994; Ryan, Hicks & Midgley, 1997).

While much of the research on student academic goals has focused on task and ability goal orientations, there has been a growing recognition of the role of student social goals in organizing, directing and motivating behaviour (McInerney, Roche, McInerney & March, 1997; Urdan & Maehr, 1995; Wentzel, 1994). In contrast to

academic goals, social goals are concerned with the social purposes for learning in achievement contexts and are referenced according to individuals or groups associated with the learning task. The pursuit of social goals, such as acceptance from peers, is valued highly by students of all ages (Ford, 1992) and is a desirable outcome in its own right. The inclusion of student social goals as a line of inquiry in school-related motivational studies contributes to a deeper understanding of student enrolment behaviour through the potential interactive effects of social goals on student academic goals.

> The social dimension of schooling (which includes the influence of parents, teachers and peers) may interact with both mastery and performance goals, and be extremely influential in affecting children's attitudes towards schooling, and to learning in particular.
>
> (McInerney, 2000, p. 93)

With the range of potential factors influencing an individual's motivational orientation, a student is likely to hold multiple goals at any one time, from the desire to satisfy intrinsic needs, to the desire to satisfy long-term extrinsic goal structures, and a range of social goals related to the environmental influences of school, parent, peer, and teacher values. The interaction of these multiple goals creates a complex framework of motivational influences that have intrinsic task goals, extrinsic ability goals and social goals all operating simultaneously. As student goal orientations do not act independently (Wentzel, 1996), multiple goals may interact to complement, compensate or conflict with each other. For example, student motivation to engage in a specific learning task may be enhanced by positive social goals, compensating for

academic goals that would otherwise provide insufficient motivation to engage in the learning task. Conversely, social goals may conflict with academic goals by redirecting student attention away from positive task values, such as interest, to conflicting social concerns.

The salient aspects of the socio-academic context of school culture and classroom environment may influence student goal orientations (Urdan & Maehr, 1995). The nature of the learning tasks, methods of assessment, classroom and school reward structures, and the types of student interaction promoted in the classroom can promote student goal orientations consistent with the school and classroom instructional climate (Ames, 1992; Anderman & Maehr, 1994; Covington, 2000; Urdan, Midgely & Anderman, 1998). For example, when teachers promote learning for personal improvement and the mastering of skills where success is measured according to personal accomplishment, a task-intrinsic motivation orientation is promoted. Conversely, a classroom environment that promotes an ability goal orientation focuses on levels of competence relative to others. While schools, and society generally, are inevitably achievement orientated and measure student outcomes according to ability measures (Ames & Archer, 1988; Dweck & Leggett, 1988), to suggest the development of a purely task goal orientation in educational settings would be naïve and may result in a negative effect where students do not persist in tasks or curriculum areas that hold little interest, despite their value in future applications.

Studies suggest that the policies and practices in classrooms and schools influence students' goal orientations in both task and ability dimensions (Ames & Archer, 1988;

Maehr & Midgley, 1991). The implications of goal theory in specific classroom practice and the broader school environment have been well documented (Ames, 1992; Blumenfeld, 1992; Roeser, Midgley & Urdan, 1996; Urdan *et al.*, 1998). Strategies designed to shape student goal orientations include effort attributions (Miller & Hom, 1997), opportunities for success (Urdan *et al.*, 1998), reduction in social comparison and competition (Miller & Hom, 1997), and meaningful learning experiences (Rohrkemper & Corno, 1988). No single intervention, however, is likely to be effective for all students. With social goals being highly situated and achievement goals mediated by salient classroom values, teachers and schools need to create a balance between the two goal orientations, fostering task goal activities in conjunction with ability goal activities, while being sensitive to the dynamics of contextual factors on social goals.

2.4 Contextual factors

> School motivation cannot be understood apart from the social fabric in which it is embedded. (Weiner, 1990, p. 621)

While much of the earlier work by motivational theorists focused on the individual's self-perceptions, values and beliefs, there has been recent recognition of the role of the context in which student learning takes place (Wigfield, Eccles & Rodriguez, 1998). That is, a student's motivational orientation is not limited to global factors, but includes domain specific, task specific and context specific dimensions. Fundamental to the social-cognitive perspective is an emphasis on environmental influences present within a specific context. A student's motivational orientation is a dynamic relationship between the affective dimensions and contextual factors

(Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The increasing recognition of the social organisation within the classroom and school, together with the interactions and relationships formed between a student and her peers and teacher have important implications for the student's levels of motivation (Davidson, 1997; Eccles, Wigfield & Schiefele, 1998; Maehr & Midgley, 1996; Moore, Burland & Davidson, 2003). While a growing body of music education research literature has explored the role of social context on student motivation, little of the research has examined a full range of social influences concurrently (Moore, Burland & Davidson, 2003). The current study provides an extension to the existing body of educational research by employing an integrative framework thoroughly grounded in the motivational literature. This integrative framework explores the motivational influences both inside and outside of the music classroom, in conjunction with literature relevant to the contextual factors of school culture, peer group, family values, and student perceptions of teachers. While Section 2.4 provides a separate review of the research literature for each contextual factor, it is important to acknowledge that the "multiple contexts interact with each other to impact school music in myriad ways" (Bresler, 1998, p. 2).

2.4.1 School culture

The type of school attended is seen to be a significant environmental influence on the development and expression of student motivation (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) and often perpetuates existing social patterns. In choosing a school for their child, parents generally select a model of education consistent with their own values, attitudes and beliefs. The school may, therefore, act as an extension of the social patterns experienced by the child at home. This is very often the case for students attending high fee paying independent schools. Parents who are able to afford an education for

their children in an independent school represent those parents with the greatest educational choice (Whitty, Power & Halpin, 1998).

What takes place in the classroom is critical, but "the classroom is not an island" (Maehr & Midgley, 1991). The degree of congruence between the classroom goals and practices and the broader school goals can either affirm or alter the student's complex learning related attitudes and beliefs. The school wide goals, policies and procedures interact with the classroom climate and may have effects that supersede those of individual classrooms and the acts of individual teachers.

Many schools reward student achievement behaviours that conform to the 'standards' reflecting cultural values. Bresler (1998), in two separate studies of school music in American elementary schools, found that, "Though the teaching of concepts and skills is characteristic of all academic school subjects, they are rarely part of the principal's expectations of Music" (Bresler, 1998, p. 8). Principals valued music's social role, its ability to create a sense of school community and its public relations potential. This was demonstrated through principals' expectations for school music programs to perform at whole school and community events. The school context is positioned in a societal context where an emphasis is placed on student literacy with the arts being viewed primarily as a source of entertainment and as a valuable tool in school promotion.

Consistent with the social-cognitive perspective where contextual and environmental factors play a significant role in student motivation, the transition from primary school to secondary school presents a major change in the environmental influences.

School structure, organisation and curriculum delivery change significantly and a number of studies have suggested that these changes in contextual and environmental factors contribute to the decline in motivation during adolescence (Eccles *et al.*, 1993b; Maehr & Midgley, 1991).

Anderman and Maehr (1994) observe that an accumulating body of research has found that the typical middle school context (Year Six to Year Nine) is ability goal orientated (Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Maehr & Midgley, 1991). The emphasis on extrinsic motivators for the purpose of performance orientated tasks can be seen through the tendency to judge schools on a one-dimensional scale of academic excellence. Academic test results are used to place a school within a competitive educational market place. Student achievements in external examinations and competitive events in 'core' curriculum areas (for example, Westpac Mathematics Competition, Australian Schools Science Competition, University of NSW English Competition, and Australian Geography Competition) enjoy widespread coverage with student achievements in state-wide examinations being published in major print and television media. Whitty, Power and Halpin (1998) discuss these standardised indicators of student and school performance as a method of monitoring school 'output' and as way of providing consumer information to parents.

> These are then often compiled as league tables – ranking schools within localities and even nationally. Successes and failure become transparent, so that governments can monitor the relative successes of school and parents can make informed choices.
>
> (Whitty, Power & Halpin, 1998, p. 80).

The public focus on individual school achievements in the New South Wales Higher School Certificate and external examinations in 'core' curriculum areas further promotes a tiered system of education in Australian schools where some curriculum areas form a compulsory component of all children's education whilst other curriculum areas exist only as electives. This one-dimensional scale of academic excellence is particularly influential in the curriculum offerings in high fee paying independent schools, as success in the competitive academic curriculum leads to increased prestige in the education market place.

> The content of what [schools] teach and how they assess is regulated by the government, and their performance is evaluated and rewarded or penalised through parents' choices.
>
> (Whitty, Power & Halpin, 1998, p. 80)

Meadmore and Meadmore (2004) describe the performance of Australian independent schools according to "performativity", where competition, comparison, demonstrated productivity, and accountability are demanded for the enhancement of market appeal. This shift towards "performativity" represents a strong client-driven market place.

Parents actively engage in education market research before enrolling children in independent Australian schools. Independent schools, in turn, have embraced market strategies and become more aggressive in promotional activities (Symes, 1998).

As "schools are shaped by cultural practices and values and reflect the norms of the society for which they have been developed" (Hollins, 1996, p. 31), the priority given to literacy, numeracy, science and information technology at a national level within Australia (MCEETYA, 1999), combined with an increased market accountability has implications for school academic culture. Independent schools may promote an extrinsic motivation orientation through the rewarding of student achievement consistent with the values and norms of the broader community. The consequences of an extrinsic motivation orientation could include low task persistence and task avoidance for students who perceive low levels of competence in those curriculum areas valued highly within the school culture.

2.4.2 Peer group influences

Friendship networks have a major impact on student attitudes and behaviour (Hartup, 1996) with peer group influences on student behaviour being at its greatest during adolescence (Wigfield, Eccles & Rodriguez, 1998). The level of peer group influence during adolescence has been reported to be greater than the influence of families or teachers (Patterson, DeBaryshe & Ramsey, 1989; Urberg, 1999). Reasons for the heightened influence of peers during adolescence include the rating of social activities as more important and enjoyable than academic activities (Wigfield *et al.*, 1991); the want and need for social approval (Berndt & Keefe, 1996); the increased amount of

unsupervised time spent with peer groups when compared to younger children (Wigfield, Eccles & Rodriguez, 1998); and, heightened value of peer evaluations about personal competence (Berndt & Keefe, 1996). The heightened awareness and concern about peer group acceptance during adolescence has a significant bearing on the study of academic motivation, self-concept and behaviour and is a feature of social identity theory.

Social identity theory contends that student membership of a social group and self-esteem are related (Crocker *et al.*, 1991; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The nature of the individual's membership, however, can vary considerably from acceptance within the social group to merely tolerance. Findings from research studies involving less popular members of social groups have been inconsistent with these mixed results serving only to highlight the complexity of group membership and self-concept. Webb and Palincsar (1996) discuss the complexities of peer group effects on student motivation according to variations in the group structure and the nature of the interactions between group members. For example, whether peer group influences facilitate or debilitate student motivation for classroom music may depend on the nature of the peer group's motivational orientation or the motivational orientation of individual children who may dominate peer group interactions.

The classroom environment represents a complex social context to which students bring multiple social and intellectual goals (Wentzel, 1991). Research focused on the social goals of students entering high school has consistently demonstrated that friends and peer groups influence students' academic achievement, attitudes and motivation towards school (Blumenfeld, 1992; Urdan & Maehr, 1995). This influence

can be either negative or positive according to the level of consistency between personal and peer group goals. The social costs involved in pursuing an academic goal or curriculum area when a student's peer group holds a negative view towards that particular curriculum area may result in social isolation. Gross (1989) describes this influence as a 'forced choice' dilemma where students may make decisions related to engagement and participation according to social interests rather than academic interests. The social goals of peers and friends are particularly influential as students move into junior high school (Gross, 1989) and make the development of social identity difficult as students balance personal interests and intrinsic motivations with the dominant values of the social group.

In seeking the support of peers, in the form of classmate approval, student motivation to participate in the classroom music curriculum and the adoption of academic goals may be influenced by friendship systems and social opportunities.

2.4.3 Family values

The role of the home environment and specifically parental values has been found to be significant in a child's development of specific areas of interest (Brand, 1986; Chadwick, 2001). The home environment serves as a particular cultural setting that transmits certain values, social practices, and beliefs from the family to the child through espoused and enacted parental values (Bugental & Johnston, 2000; Byng-Hall, 1985; Davidson & Borthwick, 2002; Hoffer, 1992). Numerous studies have found parental support, encouragement and provision of resources for their children to engage in music activities to be significant motivational influences (Davidson *et al.*,

1996; Hallam, 1998; Howe & Sloboda, 1991b; Lehmann, 1997; McPherson & Davidson, 2002).

Whilst there is a growing body of music education literature focused on the investigation of the interaction between parental influence and music participation in instrumental music contexts, there appears to be a gap in the exploration and understanding of the role of parents in influencing student motivation to participate in classroom music. The research literature that has investigated the interaction between parental influence and music participation in instrumental music contexts, however, provides important insights into the potential relationships that may lead to motivational factors in the classroom music context. The discussion of the role of parental influence as a factor in student motivation to participate in music is reviewed according to a distinction between relatively aware, explicit, event dependent cognitions and relatively unaware implicit schematic cognitions as proposed by Bugental and Johnston (2000).

2.4.3.1 Enacted parental values

The influence of parental values on the development of student interest and engagement in instrumental music activities has been well documented (Chadwick, 2001; Davidson *et al.*, 1996; Howe & Sloboda, 1991a; McPherson & Davidson, 2002; Sloboda & Howe, 1991). The bulk of this literature, however, is concerned with parental support for instrumental music and the influence on student achievement in music (e.g. Brand, 1986; Brokaw, 1983; Graziano, 1991; Zdzinski, 1992). Zdzinski (1996) refers to the paucity of information relating to parental involvement in

secondary school music and the lack of research investigating non-achievement outcomes.

> Research is needed to examine the relationship of parental involvement and musical performance achievement, cognitive achievement in music, and the development of musical attitudes and affective outcomes.
>
> (Zdzinski, 1996, p. 36)

The nature of the influence of parental values on the child's motivational orientation can be seen through the facilitative actions of parents in exposing, initiating, supporting, and encouraging children's engagement in specific areas of interest (Sloboda *et al.*, 1996; Sloboda & Howe, 1991). Sloane (1985), in her study of talented student athletes, musicians and artists, confirms the role of parents' recreational interests in providing opportunities for children to experience informal encounters as part of the family environment. She describes these initial informal encounters as opportunities to arouse curiosity and potentially stimulate interest in the child. The child is receptive to these initial encounters and enjoys opportunities to share positive experiences with the parents (Albert, 1980). Early indications of a developing interest by the child in the parent's area of interest are often then rewarded and further opportunities for engagement encouraged.

As the child seeks further rewards and encouragement through engagement in the parent's area of interest, parents may promote continued engagement through higher levels of support and encouragement through the provision of resources and formalised instruction, facilitating increased curiosity.

> The interaction between espoused and enacted parental values is considered therefore, to be a fundamental component of environmental catalysts influencing the provision of field specific opportunities for learning, training, and practice which Gagne (1993, 1995) deems central to the talent development process. What parents believe to be valuable directs their personal involvements and has the potential to generate opportunities for positive encounters with specified skills and knowledge for their children. (Chadwick, 2001, p. 68)

Brand (1986) highlights the role of parents in the musical achievements of their children in grade two of primary school by identifying a positive relationship between parents' attitudes towards music and consequent involvement in their child's musical engagement. The parents' active participation in their child's musical activities included singing to their child and providing toy musical instruments to play with. The actions of the parents reflected enacted values and were demonstrated in the parents' everyday interactions with their child. Other examples of explicit parent involvement demonstrating espoused values include the active monitoring of music practice to the satisfaction of the parent's standards (McPherson & Davidson, 2002; Sloane, 1985).

Sloboda (2001) identified support from parents as one of the conditions of sustained student engagement with music during the student's primary school years. In this study of 684 instrumental music students, at age eleven years, the intrinsic motivators of pleasure and enjoyment were identified as the key motivational factor. The same

students, who had demonstrated high levels of motivation and participation in instrumental music at age eleven years, reported a major shift in motivational orientation twelve months later. This group of students, now entering secondary school, described instrumental music as '*boring*', with musical achievement now discounted as other activities became more valued than music. The reduced influence of parent support for music as a factor influencing student engagement with instrumental music during the transition point of primary to secondary education was reported to reflect increasing student assertions of autonomy and self-determination.

In a study of 157 beginning instrumentalists aged between seven and nine years, McPherson and Davidson (2002) explored the interactions between the mother and child during the first year of instrumental music tuition. The findings of this study confirm the previous findings of Sloboda (2001) with many students perceiving instrumental music practice in much the same way as normal school homework, in that it was regarded as a "chore" or "boring". 80.25% of students required reminding or support within the first few months of instrumental tuition, despite most students commencing instrumental music tuition as eager interested learners. As the development of instrumental performance skills is achieved through an initial commitment to learning together with persistent practice efforts (McPherson, 2001; Sloboda *et al.*, 1996), students in the first stage of learning appear unlikely to develop and sustain musical engagement without explicit parent support.

Much of the initial parent support for the commencement of instrumental music lessons, music practice and participation in music activities occurs through extrinsic motivators. That is, parents may negotiate rewards for regular instrumental practice,

share musical experiences within the family, praise practice efforts, or purchase a new musical instrument for the child to commence lessons. Sloboda and Davidson (1996), however, suggest that extrinsic motivation is unlikely to see a student persist with instrumental music over an extended period of time. The attainment of a reward becomes the reason for musical engagement, rather than an interest and motivation in music itself. For continued participation in instrumental music it has been suggested students need to develop a sense of personal satisfaction, reward or enjoyment from the musical experience (Campbell, 1998; Sloboda & Davidson, 1996).

2.4.3.2 Schematic cognitions within the family environment

In contrast to the deliberate facilitative actions of parents intended to promote student engagement in music, parental attitudes and values may operate implicitly and with little awareness. Within social psychology, these cognitive processes have been referred to as scripts or schematic accounts that reflect the desirability of particular student behaviours (Bugental & Johnston, 2000). Such scripts or schematic accounts represent knowledge structures that influence behaviour and establish expectations (Bargh, Chen & Burrows, 1996; Byng-Hall, 1985).

Davidson and Borthwick (2002) employed "Family Script Theory" (Byng-Hall, 1985) to explore the role of parental influence on children's musical engagement. This case study revealed family dynamics to be very important underlying factors in the development of the child's practice habits, motivation, self-perceptions of musical ability and musical identity. The nature of parental influence was found to occur through parents' perceptions and expectations of their children's musical engagement. These perceptions and expectations acted as a metaphorical 'script' where children

were assigned specific roles, for example, to be a musician much like the mother. In this study, the mother's expectations and matching support for her son's musical involvement determined the nature of the son's musical progress as he responded to the standards demanded. Similarly, the parent's lower musical expectations and anticipated behaviours for a younger son produced a 'script' that promoted a different set of predetermined behaviours, with the child assuming a different role to that of his older sibling, while remaining consistent with the parents' "script".

"Family Script Theory" (Byng-Hall, 1985) proposes that the parental values, set into the daily lives of the family through the actions and behaviours of the parents, serve as determinants of child behaviour and motivation. Where parents demonstrate a link between the values they articulate and those that they enact, children are more likely to adopt values consistent with those enacted by their parents (Chadwick, 2001; Gross, 1993; Sloane, 1985). Within the music context, the body of research that has demonstrated a link between parent and child task values suggests that parents who value musical experiences and who are personally involved in music through professional or recreational pursuits can produce informal opportunities for positive music experiences for their children, ultimately influencing the recreational pursuits of their children.

In an Australian study of 194 talented young musicians, Chadwick (2001) replicated previous findings regarding the role of parents in stimulating a child's interest in music and facilitating opportunities for musical engagement. Chadwick explored the origin of children's interest in music and found that "the actions of musically involved parents serve to positively stimulate children's interests in specific areas of expertise"

(Chadwick, 2001, p. 72). Howe and Sloboda's (1991a) findings reinforce the role of the home environment as a source of motivation in the initial stages of music instruction through the actions of siblings. Of the forty-two music students participating in this study, fifteen had been influenced by an older brother or sister who played a musical instrument while an older child outside of the family had influenced two other students. Siblings were described as arousing awareness, providing a role model, and creating a home environment where music practice was part of the daily family routine.

Studies by Sosniak (1985) and Howe and Sloboda (1991a) provide further evidence of the role of espoused parental values as factors influencing student participation and achievement in music. In each of these studies the parents' level of interest was significant in the provision of musical opportunities for their children and this influence was not limited to enacted values alone. In both studies, students gifted in music participated in interviews where their childhood experiences were discussed for the antecedents of musical achievement. Sosniak (1985) found of the twenty-four exceptional young professional musicians interviewed in her study, only twelve had grown up in families where parents were actively involved in music, although all parents held a favourable attitude towards music education. Howe and Sloboda (1991a) found only twenty percent of music students attending a selective music school had parents actively involved in music. Surprisingly, Howe and Sloboda (1991a) found thirty-six percent of parents had little interest in music, and MacKenzie (1991), in his study of motivational criteria for students commencing instrumental lessons, reported home and social factors to be relatively weak influences.

Despite the relatively weak influence of parents on student decisions to participate in music activities (MacKenzie, 1991; Howe & Sloboda, 1991a), the overwhelming evidence suggests a strong positive relationship between parental values and student musical engagement. The contradictory evidence reported by MacKenzie (1991) and Howe and Sloboda (1991a) raises some questions regarding the nature of parental influence as perceived by students, highlighting the complexity of the multiple motivational criteria influencing student behaviour.

2.4.4 Student perceptions of teachers

At the centre of all student educational experiences and activity is the relationship between the teacher and the student. Teachers are a distinct socialising agent who can influence student motivation and educational outcomes through the goals communicated to students and the provision of contexts conducive to learning and the adoption of these goals (Wentzel, 1999). Variations in an individual student's behaviour and motivation can, therefore, be attributed to variations in the socially valued goals and learning environments established by individual teachers. Evidence of the role of teachers in enhancing student motivation and achievement in music can be found in a growing body of educational research (for example, Asmus, 1989; Creech & Hallam, 2003; Davidson *et al.*, 1998; Hendel, 1995; Howe & Sloboda, 1991b; MacKenzie, 1991; Moore, Burland & Davidson, 2003; Sloboda & Davidson, 1996; Sloboda & Howe, 1991).

MacKenzie's (1991) study of the motivational criteria used to initiate instrumental music lessons with forty-eight beginning instrumental music students in a junior

school, found that the role of the teacher was substantial. While personal interest in music was the most common motivating factor, students' perceptions of individual teachers were the second most influential factor in student motivation to commence instrumental music lessons. Student perceptions of individual teachers were based on the teacher's personal qualities, assessed according to the nature of teacher encouragement and evaluative feedback.

Howe and Sloboda (1991b) reinforced the high level of influence of a teacher's personal qualities in motivating students during initial musical experiences. In this study, Howe and Sloboda found that despite one in four students describing the musical expertise of their first teacher as "poor" and half of the students and parents interviewed rating the first teacher as no better than average, the teacher was described as a positive motivating factor in student musical engagement. The researchers suggested that beginning students were generally not aware of the teacher's limitations and were motivated by the rapport and encouragement that they received from their instrumental music teacher. With 88% percent of respondents describing their first teacher as "warm or friendly", Howe and Sloboda were able to conclude, "the personal qualities of individual teachers exert influences which are of crucial importance in young musicians' lives" (p. 55). The nature of the teacher's personal qualities as a motivating factor was confirmed in a later study exploring the social context of musical development. In this study, Moore, Burland and Davidson (2003) reported, "a friendly teacher is a necessary factor in sustaining and developing a child's learning" (p. 544).

Davidson and colleagues (1998) expanded the study of teacher influence on young instrumentalists to include students who had ceased taking instrumental instruction. This study supported the significant role of the teacher in motivating students to continue with instrumental studies and further highlighted the teacher's "personal" characteristics as being significant in influencing student musical development. The teacher's "personal" characteristics were described according to how friendly, encouraging, and relaxed the teacher was. The teacher who was friendly, encouraging and relaxed provided appropriate support for the beginning instrumental student, making the learning experience more enjoyable and intrinsically rewarding, while the teacher's "professional" characteristics of performance ability and professional skills became more significant for older adolescent students who respected teachers as performing musicians. This finding indicates the influence of student perceptions of music teachers in motivating student participation in music is not limited to beginning students and that the nature of the influence changes during musical development.

Support for the sustained influence of student perceptions of teachers in motivating student musical engagement can be found in an earlier five-year longitudinal study (Bloom, 1985). In this study, Bloom found that teachers remain important influences on student musical engagement, that the nature of the teacher's influence changed according to age and musical development, and that these changes typically occur over three phases. The first phase represents the early stages of learning where teachers described as enthusiastic and generous in praise created enjoyable learning experiences that enhanced student motivation. The second phase is characterised by the development of specific skills and a sense of achievement. Students in this phase of musical development begin to value the teacher's professional skills and

constructive criticism that may lead to improved levels of performance. The third phase has the student focused on a shared dedication for musical achievement between the teacher and student with the relationship with the teacher no longer serving as a motivating factor for musical engagement.

Maidlow (1998) investigated the attitudes, experiences and expectations of music students in their final year of secondary schooling, and at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in tertiary music education. From this study, Maidlow suggests that the motivating role of the music teacher becomes increasingly significant as students become older whilst family support, although very important in the early stages of musical development, becomes less of a motivating factor.

Moore, Burland and Davidson (2003) conclude that having a teacher who is perceived to be friendly is critical in determining whether beginning students continue to learn music. Evidence of the level of influence that student perceptions of music teachers have on continued musical engagement is supported in the classroom music context. In a study of 276 generalist Bachelor of Teaching students, Temmerman (1993) surveyed students about the nature of their classroom music experiences while at school and found that 152 respondents referred to their worst school music experience as being in the Year Seven and Eight non-elective classroom music program. Of the 152 students, 31% referred to the music teacher as the source of the negative experience, describing them as not having an adequate knowledge of the subject area and displaying intolerance towards students.

It is significant to note that of the growing body of research investigating the role of the teacher as a motivational factor in student participation in music (for example, Creech & Hallam, 2003; Davidson *et al.*, 1998; Hendel, 1995; Howe & Sloboda, 1991b; MacKenzie, 1991; Moore, Burland & Davidson, 2003; Sloboda & Davidson, 1996; Sloboda & Howe, 1991), the bulk of this research has been limited to the personality traits of teachers as assessed by students. Schmidt, (1989) in his study of college-aged students, found that the personality type of the student influenced perceptions held of the teacher and evaluative feedback. With this in mind, the findings related to the "personal" characteristics of teachers need to be considered in light of the multifaceted nature of human behaviour, and specifically personality. There is a need to consider the differential role that a range of social factors may play in shaping student perceptions of teachers. The relative influence of a student's social context and personal characteristics are yet to be determined in the individual's perceptions of specific teachers.

While much of the research exploring student perceptions of individual teachers as factors influencing musical engagement has been limited to instrumental music instruction with small groups or individuals, there are implications from this work for the teacher of classroom music. The discussion above has illustrated considerable support for the critical role teachers play in enhancing student motivation in music learning experiences and that the nature of this influence changes as students develop musically. The implications of this research suggest teachers involved in the delivery of early classroom music experiences in secondary school need to place a high priority on establishing a relaxed and supportive classroom environment, with teachers demonstrating an enthusiasm for music and a willingness to praise student

efforts. For those students who are developing specific music skills, teachers need to build on the positive student-teacher relationships through the promotion of a sense of achievement within students. Teachers who demonstrate a high level of musical knowledge and skills are able to offer constructive criticism that may lead to further musical development.

2.5 Summary

The review of literature provided in this chapter has been organised into two groups according to the key motivational factors and salient socio-cultural influences. The inclusion of the key motivational factors of task-values, domain specific academic self-concept and self-efficacy, causal attribution, and student goals, together with the socio-cultural influences of school culture, peer group influences, family values and perceptions of teachers, contributed to the development of an understanding of a range of factors that could potentially influence student motivation to participate in an elective classroom music curriculum.

The implications of this review of research literature are that a range of factors could potentially operate simultaneously to influence student enrolment behaviour. The bulk of research in student motivation has been characterised by a confined focus on select motivational factors. Considerably less research has investigated the full range of motivational and contextual factors of non-elective classroom music students who engage in the general study of music.

While concerns regarding low student enrolments in early secondary classroom music curricular are not new, research that has investigated the motivational factors

influencing student enrolment behaviour of early adolescents in Australian classroom music contexts remains limited. This study aimed to identify and provide insight into the nature of the motivational and contextual factors that influenced student classroom music enrolment behaviour within the specific setting of a high fee paying independent coeducational Kindergarten to Year Twelve day and boarding school in a regional city of New South Wales. Integral to this investigation was the development of an understanding of the relationships between the multiple cognitive and social processes that may contribute to a student's motivational orientation.

A detailed account of the research procedures employed in this study is presented in Chapter Three. This methodology chapter reports on the rationale for the research design, data collection methods and data analysis strategies employed in investigating the research questions. Contextual information related to the setting and my role as the researcher is included in this chapter as elements shaping data generation.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology employed in addressing the research questions underpinning this study. The research employed an interpretive case study design (Stake, 1995) to identify and examine those factors that influenced student enrolment behaviour when considering the Year Nine elective classroom music curriculum in a high fee paying independent coeducational Kindergarten to Year Twelve day and boarding school in a regional city of New South Wales. Integral to this investigation was an understanding of the complex interaction of the multiple cognitive and social mediators that contribute to a student's motivational orientation. The range of cognitive mediators influencing student motivation have been addressed according to the theories related to task values (Wigfield & Eccles, 1992), academic self-concept (Marsh & Hattie, 1996), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), causal attribution (Weiner, 1985), and student goals (Midgley, 1993; 2002). An understanding of student motivation cannot, however, be regarded simply as a set of characteristics specific to the individual, rather, it must include the interactions between the individual and the situational context (Wigfield, Eccles & Rodriguez, 1998). Accordingly, a naturalistic methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) was employed in this study that included an exploration of the personal and subjective appraisals of environmental conditions that have been identified as performing a mediating role on student motivation (Boekaerts, 2001; Volet, 2001).

This chapter reports on the research design, data collection methods and data analysis strategies employed in this study. Features of the research design are outlined in the

opening sections of this chapter, including the aim of the study, ethical issues, role of the researcher, and a description of the setting and participants. Section 3.8 provides an outline of the design and administration of the survey and interview instruments. A general overview of the phases of the project and methods of data analysis is provided in Section 3.9 followed by a discussion of the methodological issues related to authenticity and transferability in Section 3.10.

3.2 Aim of the study

As discussed in Chapter One, the aim of this study was to identify and provide insight into the nature of the motivational and contextual factors that influenced student classroom music enrolment behaviour. This study specifically examined student and parent perceptions of the influences and motivations of Year Eight students, average age thirteen years, when considering participation in the elective Year Nine music curriculum in the specific setting of a high fee paying independent coeducational Kindergarten to Year Twelve day and boarding school in a regional city of New South Wales. The topic of this study grew from my strong belief in the multiple values of the arts, and specifically music, in a child's education and a concern with the low student participation rates in the classroom music curriculum as students moved from the mandatory to elective classroom music curriculum within this setting. The low level of student participation in classroom music during transition points in schooling, for example, from primary to secondary schooling, reflected a trend internationally (Colley & Comber, 2003; Hendley, Stables & Stables, 1996; Lamont *et al.*, 2003; O'Neill *et al.*, 2002; Ross, 1995; Sloboda, 2001).

The research questions that guided the study were:

1. What factors influence student participation in the elective classroom music curriculum?
2. What components of the compulsory classroom music curriculum contribute to student motivation to participate in the elective music curriculum?
3. What perceptions do students hold of their own abilities, attitudes and knowledge of music?

3.3 Research design

In considering an appropriate research design it was essential that the study's research questions served to guide the research design and selection of data gathering instruments (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). As it "is difficult if not impossible to understand students' motivation without understanding the contexts" (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002, p. 128), a naturalistic methodology was employed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Stake, 1994) in order to conduct "an in-depth investigation of a given social unit resulting in a complex well organised picture of that unit" (Isaac & Michael, 1997, p. 52). The complex and multiple interactions between the ranges of social influences present in the social unit of a high fee paying independent coeducational Kindergarten to Year Twelve day and boarding school in a regional city of New South Wales required an understanding of the context in which the student perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes were grounded. To facilitate this understanding an interpretive case study design was employed to explore a phenomenon within the complexity of the social world (Burns, 2000; Guba, 1978; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Bresler and Stake (1992) identify

the hermeneutic perspective as providing a philosophical grounding for the interpretive process of the social world.

> Understanding cannot be pursued in the absence of context and interpretive framework. The hermeneutic perspective means that human experience is context bound and that there can be no context-free or neutral scientific language which will express what happens in the social world. (Bresler & Stake, 1992, p. 77)

The interpretive focus of this study required a detailed study of individual student and parent perceptions within the broader social unit of the specific school setting. Data were examined for themes or patterns that described the complexity of student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum. The construction of meaning within the hermeneutic perspective involved an interpretive process that was characterised by a focus on the interpretation and construction of meaning through a constant movement from the whole text to the constituent parts and back to the whole.

Stake (1995) categorises case studies as either 'intrinsic', 'instrumental', or 'collective'. Intrinsic case studies are those where the researcher has an intrinsic interest in the issues critical to the specific case. Instrumental case studies involve the study of a specific case to develop a general understanding of the phenomenon, while collective case studies involve the study of several cases in order to develop an understanding of a particular phenomenon.

This study was conceived from a personal interest in the factors influencing student motivation to participate in the Year Nine elective classroom music curriculum, within the social setting of a high fee paying independent coeducational Kindergarten to Year Twelve day and boarding school in a regional city of New South Wales. The phenomenon was the identification of those factors (cognitive and social) that influence student elective music curriculum enrolment behaviours. This is a phenomenon that has a broad interest beyond that of the case alone. My dual aim of constructing a full and thorough knowledge of a single, discrete case of special interest, whilst investigating a phenomenon of general interest, marks this study at the intersection between intrinsic and instrumental case study (Stake, 2000).

A multi-method approach was employed to gain a more complete understanding of student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum. A survey instrument administered to the full Year Eight cohort (n=82) provided a preliminary view of the factors influencing student elective curriculum choice. Following the analysis of survey data, individual interviews were conducted with fifteen students. Five students were invited to participate from each of three purposive samples outlined in Section 3.8.3.1. Independent pair interviews were conducted with both parents of each interviewed student to provide important perspectives and additional dimensions that served to inform emerging themes and account for possible variations within the student interview data. The semi structured, open-ended interviews provided students and parents with a voice that promoted a depth and richness of data around a wide range of factors.

3.4 Ethical issues

The study of student motivation within a specific school community presented a number of ethical issues that required careful consideration during the advanced preparation stage of the research design. Kvale (1996) identified three ethical guidelines for research involving human participants that underpinned the ethical protocol employed in the research design: informed consent, confidentiality, and consequences.

Obtaining informed consent involved providing the school principal with a full account of the purpose of the study and features of the research design before gaining access to the research setting. Following the granting of consent from the school principal to conduct the study with members of the school community, parents and students were invited to attend an information session at the school. The information session outlined the purpose of the study, features of the research design including data generation strategies, phases of the study and the nature of reporting, and possible risks and benefits from participation in the research study. Research information sheets and letters of agreement to participate were then posted to all families of students in Year Eight (see Appendices A, B, C and D). Parents and students were advised that participation was voluntary and they could withdraw from the study at any time without explanation. Consent was obtained from all parents of students in Year Eight following the full disclosure of the purpose and design of the research project, together with opportunities for parents and students to ask questions regarding any aspect of the study. One student, however, from the Year Eight cohort of eighty-three students elected not to participate in the study.

An important factor in obtaining consent from all participants was the protection of individuals' privacy through anonymity. The research design included the use of pseudonyms as part of the reporting process to render data untraceable to the individual or school. The confidential treatment of data minimised any potential negative consequences for the school, while a beneficial consequence for participation in this study was the opportunity for students and parents to inform future educational interventions designed to promote student participation in the classroom music curriculum. Participants were able to contribute to the development of understanding regarding the motivational needs of early adolescent students by sharing personal perceptions and specific experiences that may lead to improved music education experiences in the future.

The protocol employed within the research design to protect research participants from ethical concerns was presented to the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Tasmania, with approval to conduct the study granted by the University in April 2001.

3.5 My role as researcher

Fundamental to the epistemology of social inquiry is an understanding of human behaviour in context (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). With the substantive issue in this study being an understanding of the differing intentionalities of all stakeholders within a specific school setting, a full and thorough knowledge of the complexity and contextuality of student motivation was required. Stake (2005) suggests that the construction of local meaning is achieved through the researcher's extended interaction with the site, participants and activities as they occur in the natural setting. This involvement enables the researcher to assume a reflective stance where

continuous interpretation and revision of meaning seeks to add depth and insight (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000) and shape the process of inquiry.

To facilitate a reflective practice, I generated rich qualitative interview data with the parents of student interviewees. I was able to construct a personal understanding of the participants' accounts through an interactive dialogue about the meaning of the parents' experiences and perceptions. My role in the co-construction of meaning, however, required me to be critically reflective of the position and perceptions I brought to the study (Fox & Murry, 2000). I moved away from the omniscient observer (Richardson, 2000) towards a co-constructor of knowledge that involved continuous self-questioning of my interaction with the processes of data generation, interpretation, and reporting (Clarke, Edwards & Harrison, 2000).

My involvement in data generation allowed me to interpret phenomena from one perspective against the perspective of others through a "criss-crossed" reflection (Spiro *et al.*, 1987). This continuous construction of meaning served as an ongoing inductive analysis throughout the course of data generation. My understanding of meaning, as described by participants, guided subsequent observations and research strategies. My dual role of researcher and teacher, however, made student interviews particularly vulnerable to researcher influence as students could develop a tendency to offer socially desirable responses (Marcus & Fisher, 1986). To minimise response bias from researcher influence, a person unknown to the students conducted all student interviews. The use of an interviewer unknown to the students did, however, present potential for mistrust. Students could have felt uneasy about sharing personal

perceptions with a person with whom a rapport had not been developed and, therefore, may elect to withhold important information (Keats, 2000).

In addressing concerns related to potential interviewer influence on student responses, I briefed the interviewer concerning the purpose of the interview and conducted a training session on interview techniques. Issues related to interviewer presentation, the gaining of trust, establishment of rapport, authentic communication patterns consistent with a conversational tone, and the recording of data were discussed.

3.6 Setting and the case

The research project was conducted with Year Eight students, ages thirteen and fourteen years, in a high fee paying independent coeducational Kindergarten to Year Twelve day and boarding school in a regional city of New South Wales. The city is a diversified centre providing many services and facilities to the people of the local urban population of 38,000 and surrounding townships and rural districts. The city is a significant medical, educational, cultural and retail centre with major agri-businesses including the NSW Department of Agriculture and a large university agricultural program. Industry included a major white goods manufacturer and a service provider to many Sydney and regional NSW hospitals. Within the city there are two large state high schools, one large Catholic secondary school and a small Christian secondary school in addition to the research site.

The school that served as the research site for this study had an enrolment 853 students at the time of data generation, comprised of 211 students in the Primary School, from age four to twelve years, and 642 in the Secondary School, from age

twelve to eighteen years. The school was non-selective and prided itself on its family orientation. Specialised facilities for music, information and communications technology, and sport were provided in modern and well-equipped complexes.

The school had enjoyed an excellent record of achievement in the State-wide tests conducted by the University of New South Wales Educational Testing Centre, and tests mandated by the NSW Board of Studies (for example, Higher School Certificate, Years 3 and 5 Basic Skills test). While the School claimed to be primarily an academically focussed school, the co-curricular programme was viewed as an essential part of each student's total education experience. As such, all students were expected, except in special circumstances, to participate in sport, and cadets or music.

Music occupied an important place in the school community and the school offered specialised facilities for music recording and performance activities, together with teaching and rehearsal facilities to accommodate a music program that employed six full-time staff and eighteen visiting instrumental and vocal music teachers. Opportunities for student participation in music activities at the school existed through a classroom music curriculum, a co-curricular music program based around performance ensembles, and an instrumental and vocal music tuition program.

The classroom music curriculum involved all Primary School students attending a fifty-minute music lesson each week. Students in Year Seven and Year Eight, the first two years of secondary school, attended three mandatory, fifty-minute class music lessons per fortnight. From Year Nine, classroom music was offered as one of eleven elective curriculum areas available to students. At the time of this study, students

were required to nominate two elective curriculum areas for continued study in Year Nine from the following curriculum areas: Agriculture, Australian History/Geography, Commerce, Computer Studies, French, Food Technology, Latin, Music, Technics, Visual Art, and World History. Despite many students demonstrating interest in school based music activities through participation in the school co-curricular and instrumental and vocal music tuition programs, the elective classroom music curriculum had a history of low student participation rates over many years.

The co-curricular music program operated independently of the classroom music curriculum and consisted of five choirs, three concert bands, one orchestra, stage band, brass ensemble, string quartet and woodwind quintet. The co-curricular music program operated before and after the school academic timetable. Student participation in the co-curricular music program was voluntary and involved 192 students (Primary students - 61, Secondary students - 131).

The instrumental and vocal music tuition program involved students who had expressed an interest in learning a musical instrument and who had obtained consent from parents for the additional tuition fees associated with weekly individual music lessons to be charged to the family's school account. Of the 211 students enrolled in the Preparatory School (Girls - 104, Boys - 107), 47 students were undertaking individual instrumental and vocal music tuition while 189 students from a secondary school enrolment of 642 students (Girls - 319, Boys 323) participated in individual music tuition at the time of this study.

Table 3.1 provides a summary of student participation in each of the three music programs available to students in Year Nine to Year Twelve at the school at the time of data generation for this study.

Year Level	Number of students in the cohort.	Elective classroom music curriculum.	Co-curricular music program	Instrumental or vocal music tuition
Year 9	126	7	31	41
Year 10	125	4	27	35
Year 11	123	6	21	26
Year 12	110	10	17	22

Table 3.1: Student participation rates in music activities available at the school for students Years Nine to Twelve.

Student achievement in the five years immediately preceding the commencement of this study had included nine students achieving the Associate Diploma of Music and two students receiving the Licentiate Diploma of Music from the Australian Music Examinations Board. The secondary school music ensembles that formed part of the school co-curricular music program had enjoyed considerable success in regional and national performance competitions and student achievement in the classroom music curriculum of the Higher School Certificate had been consistently well above New South Wales State averages.

In summary, this investigation explored the factors influencing student motivation to participate in elective classroom music curricular through the study of a single discrete case, the elective classroom music curriculum, within the social setting of an independent co-educational secondary school in regional New South Wales.

3.7 Participants

The key participants in this study were students in the Year Eight cohort, aged thirteen and fourteen years, and the parents of interviewed students. The full Year

Eight cohort (n = 83) was invited to participate in a survey midway through the final semester of non-elective classroom music, two weeks after all Year Eight students had submitted preferred elective curriculum areas for the following school year. The survey provided a preliminary view of the factors influencing enrolment behaviour at a time when student perceptions of the factors influencing elective curriculum choice were current.

Fifteen students in the Year Eight cohort were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews, with independent pair interviews conducted with the parents of each interviewed student. Five student interview participants were selected according to their willingness to participate in the interview process from each of three purposive samples (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The purposive samples were included in the study design as they encompassed all student backgrounds as they relate to previous instrumental music experiences. Importantly, the inclusion of a representative sample of non-instrumental and non-elective students served to enrich emerging themes and account for possible variations within the data. The focus on the negative case, non-instrumental and non-elective students, is a key feature in purposive sampling (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998) as it provides an epistemological opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the critical phenomena (Stake, 2005).

The purposive interview samples involved five students invited to participate from each of the following three groups:

1 Students who had elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

2 Students participating in instrumental or vocal music tuition who had not elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

3 Students with limited or no previous instrumental or vocal music tuition who had elected not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Semi-structured interviews with parents of the interviewed student sample were included in the research design as parents are primary socialisers who have a significant influence on a student's educational and occupational choice (Eccles *et al.*, 1994). Data generated through parent interviews enabled me to obtain information that could not be accessed directly, for example, social influences that may exist beyond the school context. The parent interview data provided multiple perspectives that added breadth, complexity, richness and depth to the inquiry (Flick, 2002), clarifying meaning through the diversity of perceptions regarding the factors influencing student motivation to participate in the elective music curriculum.

3.7.1 Student interview participants: Profiles of school musical engagement

Tables 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 below, provide a summary of student backgrounds as they relate to previous instrumental and vocal music experiences for each of the invited students in each of the three purposive interview samples.

Interview respondent	Instrumental or vocal music tuition experience	Level of instrumental performance	Co-curricular involvement
Jenny	Trombone – 3 years Piano – 3 years	Grade Four A.M.E.B. trombone –Credit; Grade Four A.M.E.B. piano –Credit; Grade Three A.M.E.B. theory of music – Credit.	Concert Band; Stage Band; Brass Ensemble; Senior Choir, Chamber Choir, Orchestra
Paul	French Horn – 3 years	Grade Four A.M.E.B. French horn – Honours	Orchestra; Senior Choir, Chamber Choir
Mitchell	Alto Saxophone – 4 years	No formal external assessment	Concert Band
David	Alto Saxophone – 3 years	Grade Four A.M.E.B. saxophone – Honours	Concert Band
Annie	Voice – 5 years	No formal external assessment	Senior Choir; Chamber Choir; Orchestra

Table 3.2: Students who elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine

Interview respondent	Instrumental or vocal music tuition experience	Level of instrumental performance	Co-curricular involvement
Tom	Alto Saxophone – 3 years	Grade Three A.M.E.B. saxophone – Credit	Concert Band
Anthony	Double Bass – 4 years	Grade Three A.M.E.B. Double Bass – Credit	Senior Choir
Scott	Trombone – 4 years	Grade Four A.M.E.B. trombone – Credit	Orchestra
Angus	Guitar – 2 years	No formal external assessment	
Ray	Trombone – 4 years	Grade Four A.M.E.B. trombone – Credit	Stage Band; Orchestra

Table 3.3: Instrumental and vocal music students who elected not to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine

Interview respondent	Instrumental or vocal music tuition experience	Level of instrumental performance	Co-curricular involvement
Alex	Enjoys singing without having participated in any vocal music tuition	Unable to read music notation fluently	Senior Choir
Sophie	Learned flute through a Year Four classroom band program.	Unable to read music notation fluently	Nil
Elizabeth	Learned piano for twelve months while in Year Five.	Beginner	Nil
Allison	Enjoys singing without having participated in any vocal music tuition	Unable to read music notation	Chamber Choir
Ben	Learned trumpet for twelve months while in Year Six.	Beginner	Nil

Table 3.4: Students with limited or no instrumental music experience who elected not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

3.8 Data gathering instruments

The use of a multi-method approach to data collection was an important feature of the study as multiple data types and perspectives are essential in gaining a more complete understanding of case study phenomena (Yin, 1994). Data gathering instruments were selected according to their ability to facilitate the construction of meaning through my interaction with the study participants. Open-ended questioning was employed in the survey instrument to encourage a freedom in response that did not preclude unanticipated data, while interview questioning aimed to facilitate a richness and intensity of response that allowed me to explore the complex network of factors that may have influenced enrolment behaviour (Burns, 2000).

The primary objective of the survey instrument was to provide a preliminary view of the nature of the factors influencing student enrolment behaviour and identify potential emerging themes. The written survey was included as a method of data collection for its ability to "estimate as precisely as possible the nature of existing conditions, or the attributes of a population" (Burns, 2000, p. 566). The written survey was also viewed as an effective method for the collection of standardised data from the relatively large student cohort (Babbie, 1990).

The sensitivity of the interview and its ability to capture the multitude of descriptions of the life world of the interviewee enabled a social construction of meaning (Kvale, 1996). Hermeneutic interpretations of the meanings of text, created through interactions with students and parents during the interview conversation, were intended to establish a co-construction of the respondent's intended or expressed meaning.

3.8.1 Survey design

The development of the survey instrument was informed by literature related to surveying as a data collection technique (Burns, 2000; Cohen & Manion, 1994; Leedy, 1997), together with factors identified from the literature as significant in student motivation (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; O'Neill & McPherson, 2002).

Important considerations in the design and implementation of the survey instrument included the objectives of the survey, information needed, survey construction, pilot study, survey publication and survey administration (Cohen & Manion, 1994).

3.8.1.1 Information needed

Information was gathered around the four motivational categories identified by Eccles and Wigfield (2002) in their review of motivational beliefs, values, and goals. The four motivational categories were based around theories focused on expectancies of success (self-efficacy, self-concept); task values (intrinsic and utility values, goal theory); the integration of expectancies and values (attribution theory, expectancy-value models); and the integration of motivation and cognition (social-cognitive theories related to contextual factors). The coherence between the four motivational categories identified by Eccles and Wigfield (2002) and a range of authors (Davidson, 1999, O'Neill & McPherson, 2002; Thomas, 1992), regarding factors found to be influential in student motivation enabled the development of the survey instrument and interview schedule to proceed with some confidence in content validity.

Open-ended questioning was employed in the survey (Appendix E) to explore each motivational category according to the research site and participants. The use of open-ended questioning was intended to promote a freedom in response without limiting the respondent to predetermined criteria. Table 3.5 outlines the questioning employed in the survey for the purpose of examining the uniqueness of individual students and the large number of factors that may influence student motivation according to the motivational categories identified by Eccles and Wigfield (2002).

Motivational Categories	Survey Questions
Expectancies of success	What subjects do you enjoy at school and why do you enjoy these subjects more than some of the others? What school subjects do you think you are good at? b) Why do you think you are better at these subjects compared to the other subjects you study? Are there any subjects that you find difficult or that you think you are not very good at? If 'Yes' what subjects do you find difficult?
Task values	Which two elective subjects did you choose for Year Nine? b) What were your reasons for choosing these two elective subjects? Reasons for choosing your first elective subject - Reason for choosing your second elective subject – Were there any other subjects you would like to have studied if you could have had more choices? If 'Yes' what other subjects would you like to have studied in Year Nine? Was there anything that you did not enjoy about Music in Year 8? If 'Yes' what did you dislike about Music in Year 8? Was there anything that you enjoyed about Music in Year 8? If 'Yes', what did you enjoy about Music in Year 8?
Motivation and cognition (contextual factors): Teacher	Who were your favourite teachers in Year 8?
Peer group **Parents**	What are some of the elective subjects your friends are doing? Did your parents help you to choose your elective subjects? If 'Yes', which subjects did your parents think would be good to study? Why do you think your parents wanted you to study these subjects rather than some of the others available?
School culture	What do you think the school sees as important for the students? Why do you think the school sees this as being more important than other things that occur in the school?

Motivation and cognition (contextual factors): **Family values**	Does anyone in your family play a musical instrument? If 'Yes' who and what instrument do they play? Do you listen to music at home? If 'Yes', what type of music do you like listen to? You can give examples of bands, composers or a radio station that you like to listen to if you would like. What styles or types of music do your parents listen to? Give an example of a band or radio station if this helps. Have you ever had lessons on a musical instrument? If 'Yes', what instrument and how long did you take lessons for? Instrument - ..... Number of years you took lessons..... If 'No', would you like to be able to play a musical instrument? If 'Yes', what instrument would you play? Have you had the opportunity to play a musical instrument but chosen not to?

Table 3.5: Survey questions grouped according to content categories

3.8.1.2 Survey construction

The sequencing of question is an important factor in survey design. To enhance completion rates of student surveys, questions that are either open-ended or perceived to be sensitive should be preceded with unthreatening questions that do not require extended responses (Leedy, 1997). Accordingly, questions were worded to encourage a positive response where possible and questions that were perceived to be more sensitive were placed further into the survey as respondents, having already completed a significant number of questions, had committed themselves to the survey and were more likely to complete the remaining questions (Lin, 1976).

The presentation of the survey can have an important effect on the co-operation of the respondent to complete all questions (Sudman & Bradburn, 1983). The survey design

featured a booklet format to prevent pages being placed out of order or removed. Pages were printed double sided, reducing the appearance of length and to promote flow from one question to the next. Font size and spacing were also considered to avoid crowding questions and splitting a question across more than one page. Questions were grouped according to motivational categories and vocabulary was used that was appropriate for the reading age of respondents.

3.8.1.3 Pilot study

Tuckman (1994) and Kerlinger (1986) urge the inclusion of pilot testing in any survey design so as to ensure optimum design, usability and content validity. Features of the survey pilot study included:

- A review of the survey instrument by a colleague with thirty years teaching experience at the school where the study was conducted. The teaching colleague's role in the school included student literacy with her primary teaching responsibilities being the teaching of English in each of the lowest ability grouped classes of Years Seven to Ten. The teaching colleague was asked to review the survey for readability and comprehension.

- The ethical protocol included within the research design, outlined in Section 3.4, was employed with the participants of the pilot study. In addition to the full disclosure of the purpose of the study, the purpose of the pilot study was clarified with each participant immediately prior to the completion of the pilot survey so that the debriefing session that immediately followed the completion of the survey could focus discussion around the survey questions, wording, length, presentation and invite feedback generally on the survey design.

- The five students invited to participate in the pilot study of the survey instrument were in Year Seven at the school where the study was conducted. The five students were randomly invited to participate from the lowest of four academically streamed classes. Year Seven students were invited to participate in the pilot study as they represented students one year younger than the target student population. The difference in age and the selection of students with reported lower literacy levels, relative to the respective peer group and identified by the University of New South Wales literacy testing, was intended to identify any potential threats to data validity through inappropriate layout, time allocation, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Findings from this pilot study indicated a need to amend the wording of questions seven and eight.

> "*7. What do you think the school values from the students?*"

> "*8. Why do you think the school values this more than some of the other things which occur in the school?*"

There was some confusion regarding the meaning of the term 'value', with three of the five respondent's failing to answer questions seven and eight. The questions were explained individually to each of the three non-respondents and following each student's demonstrated understanding of the questions, each student was asked to

direct the same question to the researcher in the student's own words. The student's terminology was then included in each question to read:

> *"7. What do you think the school sees as important for the students?"*

> *"8. Why do you think the school sees this as being more important than other things that occur in the school?"*

3.8.2 Survey administration

The survey was conducted as an in-class task two weeks after the submission of student preferences for Year Nine elective curriculum areas. The completion of the survey during class time reduced costs and diminished the potential for poor response rates that can exist with postal surveys. Problems in administering the survey during class time, however, were related to student perceptions of the survey representing another piece of schoolwork. To address this issue, I reminded students that participation in the survey was optional and all survey responses were to be treated confidentially and anonymously. Those students accepting the invitation to participate in the survey were encouraged to think carefully about each response as their thoughts and opinions were greatly valued. Students were invited to ask questions related to any aspect of the study before electing to participate, or otherwise, in the survey. Prior to the commencement of the survey, I left the room and a non-teaching member of the school staff supervised the administration of the survey.

The full disclosure of the purpose of the survey, voluntary nature of participation, and opportunities for students to ask questions regarding any aspect of the study, appeared

to create a sense of confidence in students as participation in the survey was perceived unlikely to produce any negative consequences. The level of student confidence was reflected in the higher than anticipated student response rate, where eighty-two students from a cohort of eighty-three, completed the survey.

3.8.3 Interview design

Kerlinger (1986) supports the use of surveying as an effective method in gaining an accurate portrait of a phenomenon within a community, however, he warns of limitations related to depth of information where surveying is the only method of data collection. To facilitate the construction of a deeper level of understanding of the factors influencing student music curriculum enrolment behaviour, semi-structured interviews were included in the study design to provide a richness of data not available through the survey instrument. Open-ended questioning and a relaxed conversational tone were employed in the interviews to promote depth of response and allow time and scope for the respondent to talk freely about issues without being constrained to answering predetermined questions.

The construction of the student interview schedule (Appendix K) and parent interview schedule (Appendix M) was informed by the literature (Keats, 2000; Kvale, 1996; Seidman, 1991) with open-ended questions generated around the four motivational categories identified by Eccles and Wigfield (2002). While the motivational categories employed in the interview led the respondent towards certain themes, the questions did not lead towards certain opinions about these themes and the relaxed conversational tone allowed new questions to arise as a result of the discussion. The common motivational categories employed within each data-gathering instrument

enabled data analysis to occur around the consistent themes. Consequently, data could be compared for consistency, clarifying and authenticating the resultant findings.

3.8.3.1 Pilot study

Following the training of the student interviewer, a student in the Year Eight cohort was invited to participate in a pilot test of the interview (Seidman, 1991). The pilot test assessed the appropriateness of the recording equipment, the phrasing of questions, sequencing of questions, and general training of the interviewer. On completion of the pilot interview, the student was invited to offer feedback about the interview experience and the nature of questioning. The student reported the interview to be "fine" and the interviewer to be "friendly". The interviewer and I reflected on the interview data according to the aims of the study and the motivational categories that emerged from the survey data. While the pilot interview provided richness in response through a conversational tone, the interviewer was encouraged to employ more open-ended questions to allow important meanings to be discovered and to guide the conversation more to explore the perceptions and experiences of the student in more depth.

An independent pilot test was not conducted for the parent interview. Parents were invited, however, to reflect and comment on any aspect of the interview process at the conclusion of each interview. I advised parents that I was seeking assistance in improving the interview process for future parent interviews and that I valued their feedback on any aspect of the interview and my role as interviewer. Parents were overwhelmingly positive in their feedback promoting confidence in the parent interview as a data generation method.

3.8.4 Features of the interview

Concerns relating to researcher influence in qualitative studies have been well documented (Fontana & Frey, 2005; Seidman, 1991). In addressing these concerns, careful consideration was given to interviewer presentation, the gaining of trust, establishment of rapport, and the recording of data (Fontana & Frey, 2005).

My dual role as researcher and teacher within the research setting made student interviews particularly vulnerable to researcher influence. To minimise response bias associated with my authority relationship with student participants, a person not known to the students conducted all student interviews. The interviewer was selected both for her willingness to participate in the project and her previous interview skills and experience acquired as a qualified social worker. The interviews ranged from twenty to forty minutes in duration and were conducted at the school in a small office space.

Elements specific to the parent interview included me as the researcher conducting the interviews, raising reflexive concerns about my influence in the data collection process (Dickens & Fontana, 1994; Marcus & Fischer, 1986). In the case of the parent interviews, it was perceived to be unlikely that I would hold an imbalance of power with parent participants as parents were paying high school fees and most parents were employed in a professional capacity. The high school fees created a sense in which teachers were accountable to parents for the educational experiences and outcomes of their children. While researcher influence cannot be eliminated, the perceived lack of status difference minimised threats to response bias as a result of my participation in the interview process. Open-ended questioning techniques were also

employed where I assumed a relaxed conversational tone consistent with that of a "friendly chat". This questioning technique was employed in both the student and parent interviews to promote trust, rapport and honesty in response.

3.8.4.1 Gaining trust

Gaining trust is an important phase in the interviewing process as any mistrust on the part of the respondent may result in the withholding of valuable information (Keats, 2000). In both the student and parent interviews, the interviewers spent some time prior to the commencement of questioning welcoming the participants and thanking them for their time. The purpose of the interview was outlined and the nature and reasons for the questioning were given. Participants were reminded that there were no correct or incorrect answers and that the interviewer was interested in their thoughts, feeling and opinions. All responses were confidential and permission was sought for the interview to be tape-recorded.

The recording of all student and parent interviews further promoted a sense of conversation. This method of recording data also assisted in the development of trust, as responses were not seen to be answers to questions, rather, a conversation about issues. The tape-recording of interviews also removed limitations related to the interviewer's speed and accuracy of writing.

3.8.4.2 Rapport

A "close rapport with respondents opens doors to more informed research" (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 708). With the interviewer increasingly viewed as an active participant in the interaction with a respondent, the establishment of a close rapport

combined with the freedom of open-ended responses, promoted a discourse between the interviewer and respondent that offered opportunities to contextually ground and jointly construct meaning (Fontana & Frey, 2005).

To promote a closer rapport between the interviewer and respondent, the interview process commenced with a preliminary conversation around topics unrelated to the study, for example, recent events in the lives of participants. In the case of pair parent interviews, I was known to parents through my role as the Director of Music. My role had enabled a relationship to have been established with parents, particularly with those parents whose children had participated in school based music activities. The unstructured preliminary conversation was intended "to minimize status differences and do away with the traditional hierarchical situation of interviewing" (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p. 65). The focus of the preliminary conversation was to make the respondent feel at ease about the interview and no attempt was made to guide the direction of the discussion.

The sequencing of questions was carefully constructed to build on the relaxed preliminary conversation. Opening questions were designed around basic background information that was seen to be non-threatening and that may promote open-ended responses from which a dialogue may be developed. The "friendly chat" tone remained a feature throughout the interview process encouraging the respondent to speak freely and fully. The open-ended nature of questioning and relaxed conversational tone allowed both the interviewer and participant the flexibility to restate, clarify, summarise or paraphrase important issues to check for data redundancy (Rowan & Huston, 1997) and facilitate a co-construction of meaning.

3.8.4.3 Presentation

"Once the interviewer's presentational self is "cast," it leaves a profound impression on the respondents and has great influence on the success of the study (or lack thereof)" (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 707). To promote an interview context where the respondents were of equal status, both the student interviewer and I as the parent interviewer dressed in a neat casual manner. In my case, the relaxed dress standard removed the sense of professional role normally associated with my role as a teacher in the school setting. In addition, the parent interviews were conducted either in the evenings or on weekends in the homes of the respondents with both parents present to create an interview environment where the respondents were able to adopt equal status.

The interviewing of both parents concurrently was an important element in the study design as it was anticipated a pair interview would provide rich data that may not be available through individual interviews. Fontana and Frey (2005) describe the advantages of group interviewing to include being rich in data, aiding in recall, cumulative and elaborative, flexible and stimulating for the respondents. Dialogue between the parents frequently involved confirming, clarifying, embellishing descriptions, and questioning statements that aided in the joint construction of meaning.

3.9 Procedure

The project was conducted according to four phases of data generation and analysis as presented in Table 3.6.

Phase One	**Literature review** **Instrument design** **Pilot testing**	• A review of literature related to the key motivational factors and contextual factors that shape student motivation undertaken. • Data generation methods and analysis strategies developed within an interpretive case study design. • Ethics protocol designed and presented to the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Tasmania and approved. • Informed consent obtained from all participants. • Pilot testing of survey instrument and interviews undertaken.
Phase Two	**Construct meaning**	• Year Eight cohort (n=82) surveyed. • Purposive sample interviews with fifteen students from the Year Eight cohort conducted. • Parents of the respective Year Eight student interviewees interviewed. • Member-checking of interviews conducted.
Phase Three	**Data analysis**	• Critical analysis of student survey, and student and parent interview data undertaken.
Phase Four	**Knowledge transfer**	• Creation of an interpretive document that contained my constructed understandings of the factors influencing student elective curriculum choice.

Table 3.6: A schematic view of the design and data collection methods

3.9.1 Phase one: Pilot testing

The pilot testing of data gathering instruments, outlined in Section 3.8.1.3 and Section 3.8.3.1, examined data collection procedures and coding systems of the initial study design. The pilot study served as a valuable indicator of the appropriateness of the study design and identified areas for further consideration. Following amendments to the research instruments based on the review of the pilot study, an overview of the

research design and preliminary data were presented as a paper at a University of Tasmania post-graduate research conference. The research design was subject to clarification and question from an academic audience with considerable experience in educational research. Issues related to the reporting of findings were discussed and methodological issues refined.

3.9.2 Phase two: Construct meaning

A written survey exploring the factors that influenced student enrolment behaviour was administered to all students in the Year Eight cohort (n=82). In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with fifteen students in the Year Eight cohort according to the purposive samples outlined in Section 3.8.3, with independent interviews conducted with the parents of each interviewed student. The survey data provided a valuable overview of the key motivational factors at play in shaping student enrolment behaviour, while the rich qualitative interview data grounded survey findings in personal accounts of student motivation, illuminating the relationships between personal and contextual factors.

The student and parent interviews provided a richness of data not available through the survey instrument, deepening the level of understanding of the central themes influencing student enrolment behaviour from the respondent's perspective. Accordingly, the interview questions aimed at a cognitive clarification of the respondent's lived experiences consistent with the hermeneutic philosophy (Schwandt, 2003) of an interpretive study. The cognitive clarification was achieved through an interview discourse that established a negotiated meaning about the lived world of the respondent. Semi-structured, open-ended questioning techniques allowed

"latitude for probing and following the interviewee's sense of what is important" (Bresler & Stake, 1992, p. 85), facilitating a communal construction of knowledge that was sensitive to the multiplicity of meanings within the local context.

3.9.3 Phase three – Data analysis

Survey responses to each question were tallied for frequency and full interview transcripts were analysed according to content. While the review of literature provided a referential frame for the content analysis, the aim of this intrinsic case study was to construct meaning from the perspective of the participants. To achieve this aim, I continued to search for emerging themes from the reading and re-reading of interview transcripts. Quotes and expressions that appeared important were grouped according to themes by 'copying' extracts from full interviews and 'pasting' the extracts into a developing database consistent with 'open coding' (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, pp. 84-95) or 'cutting and sorting' (Ryan & Bernard, 2003, p. 94). The sorting and analysis of qualitative data according to themes is a principal means of managing large amounts of data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). My repeated interaction with the interview data through the interview dialogue, transcription, identification and coding of emerging themes, and open conception of interpretation (Silverman, 2005) allowed each theme to be further refined and expanded as data emerged throughout the research project.

My engagement with the social world within the school setting enabled a provisional understanding to be jointly constructed with research participants. Emergent themes were analysed according to the presuppositions and meanings, at the subjective and situational levels that constitute the lived world of the participants. The focus on the

interpretation and co-construction of meaning enabled me to continually modify or reinforce meaning throughout the course of the analysis.

While key themes were sorted and classified to clarify points of convergence and divergence, the analysis strategy was primarily focused on exploring emerging key themes according to meaning within the larger body of interview text. The constant movement between key themes and the whole text enabled an interpretive focus (Stake, 1995) where meaning was constructed within the complexities of the case. The co-construction of meaning with each individual student and parent respondent was then compared against the perspective of others to identify consistency (Stake, 1995) with patterns and regularities within certain conditions. To minimise the likelihood of misinterpretation, the data analysis process involved re-examining emerging themes across interview participants to both explore and challenge developing conceptualisations. Interview data were continuously analysed throughout the data collection process. The iterations among data collection and data interpretation continued until there was sufficient depth of information and the analysis developed such that further interpretations yielded redundant or minimal data (Denzin, 1989).

Underpinning the interpretive process was an acknowledgement of the personal influences and prejudices that I brought to the interaction and construction of meaning. To mediate my influence on the epistemological processes, reflexivity was employed as a strategy to attempt to balance the benefits of my involvement in the research setting with a commitment to reflect faithfully the multiplicity of views and voices present within the case. Continuous questioning about the nature of "what I

know" and "how I know it" (Clarke, Edwards & Harrison, 2000, p. 1) were used throughout the data analysis process to "identify socially and rhetorically constructed boundaries that delimit [my] view of the social field" (Schubert, 1995, p. 1010).

3.9.4 Phase four: Knowledge transfer

My conceptualisation of the case was bound in personal meanings of the context, participants and phenomena developed through my extended interaction with the site through my role as the Director of Music. In seeking to substantiate the transfer of knowledge to the reader, I openly acknowledged my role in the case study in Section 3.5, and conveyed the experience of participants through descriptions of situational case activity in the research report. Contextual accounts were provided in Sections 1.2 and 3.6 and a description of the key participants was provided in Section 3.7. The development of my understanding of the case is provided in descriptive detail throughout the data analysis process, described in detail in Chapter Four and Chapter Five. The articulation of contextual and experiential accounts provided opportunity for vicarious experience from which the reader may construct knowledge of the case based on elements of commonality with cases already known (Stake, 2005).

3.10 Authenticity and transferability

A range of methodological issues related to authenticity and transferability has been the subject of considerable debate arising from discussions regarding the purpose and nature of naturalistic case study research. The postmodern, social-cognitive frame of reference underpinning this study assumes knowledge to be perspectival, with meaning co-constructed through negotiation between the researcher and each participant. This communal construction of knowledge places an emphasis on the contextuality of

meaning and the heterogeneity of contexts which present issues related to the translation of knowledge between contexts (Kvale, 1996).

Before transferring knowledge from this study to other contexts, the reader must answer the question: "Are these findings sufficiently authentic that I may trust myself in acting on their implications?" (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 205). The establishment of trust in the outcomes of a study is dependent on the level of methodological rigour and interpretive rigour.

In this study, authenticity was enhanced through a methodological rigour that included triangulation through the use of multiple data sources (three purposive samples from the Year Eight cohort and parents of purposive sample student participants) and collection methods (survey, individual interview, pair interview) (Yin, 1994), member checking (phase two – construction of meaning) (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) and data coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), while strategies designed to enhance the interpretive rigour included peer consultation (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) and a transparent research process (Mishler, 2000).

3.10.1 Methodological rigour

Multiple data sources and collection methods were included in the design to allow the phenomenon to be viewed from a range of perspectives while enabling findings to be assessed for consistency across the different data sources (Yin, 1994). Denzin and Lincoln (1998) refer to the process of corroboration across multiple data sources as triangulation, with this strategy serving as a qualitative alternative to the quantitative concept of validation. The use of multiple data sources also adds rigour, breadth,

complexity, richness and depth to an investigation (Flick, 2002). In this study, triangulation protocols used to capture the multiplicity of perspectives present within the social setting of an independent school, and minimise misrepresentation or misinterpretation, included data source triangulation, methodological triangulation, and theoretical triangulation (Stake, 1995).

Data source triangulation involved the inclusion of purposive sample interviews with three distinctive student and parent sample groups. The purposive sample interviews allowed rich data to be gathered from a range of perspectives, providing an epistemological opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the case (Stake, 2005). The inclusion of voices and perspectives of students and parents from a range of levels of music participation provided opportunities for balance. The omission of participant voices from any one of the purposive samples was likely to diminish the authenticity of claims (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Interview data were carefully compared across the different student and parent populations for consistency and multiplicity of motivational patterns. Comparisons between individual student interview data and the data generated from the interview with the students' parents provided additional opportunities for triangulation. Previous interpretations gained from student interview data were revised against parent interview data, allowing meaning to be clarified and credence in previous interpretations increased.

Methodological triangulation involved the use of a student survey, semi-structured individual interviews with students, and semi-structured pair interviews with parents. All methods of data generation were designed around the four motivational categories identified by Eccles and Wigfield (2002), namely, expectancies of success; task

values; the integration of expectancies and values; and the integration of motivation and cognition. The coherence between the designs of the data generation methods enabled survey and interview data to be compared for consistency and clarification. The rich qualitative interview data grounded survey findings in personal accounts of student motivation. The analysis of interview data focused on the interpretation and co-construction of meaning with emerging themes considered in relation to the survey findings.

Theoretical triangulation involved the use of an integrative conceptual framework consistent with the social-cognitive perspective. Research literature related to the key motivational constructs of task value, self-concept, self-efficacy, attribution theory, and goal theory, were explored in conjunction with literature relevant to the contextual factors of school culture, peer group, family values, and student perceptions of teachers. This social-cognitive perspective promoted an interpretive process that explored a range of factors simultaneously with data revealing interdependence between motivational and contextual factors.

The use of multiple professional perspectives to interpret data provides further opportunity for theoretical triangulation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). In this study, data were shared with a senior academic colleague whose different status position within the research discipline provided a second interpretation. This second interpretation added rigour, breadth and depth that served to enrich my understanding of emerging themes. Where congruence between interpretations was identified, confidence in the authenticity of findings was enhanced.

Member checking (Stake, 1995) of interview transcripts was included in the study design as a strategy that aimed to establish trustworthiness and overall credibility (Creswell, 1998). Interviews were recorded on an audiocassette to preserve the collection of raw data with responses summarised in written form immediately after each interview to capture non-verbal data and personal reflections on the interview. In the case of student interviews, non-verbal data and interview summaries were provided through a discussion with the student interviewer immediately following each student interview. The summary and reflections of each interview were recorded in a research diary maintained throughout the study. The research diary served as a tool for reflection on the research process, and as a record of my developing thoughts and action. The dual purpose of the research diary required events and observations to be recorded separately from my reflections. Following data generation, all interview transcripts were returned to the participants for member checking. Interview participants were asked to assess the interview transcript for accuracy and meaning while also being invited to comment further to clarify meaning, should the interview transcript not accurately capture intended thoughts and observations.

From the thirty interview transcripts that were forwarded to participants for member checking, feedback confirming the accuracy and meaning of the interview transcript was received from only eight parent and three student participants. Of those participants who did not offer feedback as part of the member checking process, contact was made by the respective interviewer. I telephoned each of the parent interview participants, while the student interviewer approached student participants to confirm the accuracy of the interview transcript and invite further comment.

While all interview participants were satisfied with the accuracy of the respective transcripts and did not elect to expand on the meanings of the data, four of the parent participants asked about the nature of the reporting process. Comments about the Headmaster and, in one case, negative comments about a teacher, were perceived to be sensitive and concerns were raised about the confidentiality of the data. In response, I guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity and advised that all data were to be coded and reported using pseudonyms. The study's reporting procedure satisfied parent concerns and each of the four parent participants allowed the interview transcripts to remain unaltered.

3.10.2 Interpretive rigour

Peer consultation was employed to minimise potential researcher bias developed through my professional investment and over familiarisation with the research participants and the research site (Morse, 1998). A senior academic colleague acted as an objective 'outsider' reading field notes, interview transcripts and survey responses, questioning the nature of descriptions, interpretations, explanations and evolving design decisions. This process offered a second 'lens' through which data were viewed affirming the nature of emergent themes. In addition, preliminary reports were presented at two music education research conferences and published in the subsequent conference proceedings. The presentations allowed me to benefit from feedback from others, including some research leaders in the field of music education. This feedback and the ensuing discussions about the nature of my study enabled me to elaborate and clarify my interpretations.

While this interpretive case study seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of the complexity and contextuality of student motivation within this specific school setting, the broader relevance of the findings can be established through 'transferability' (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). The transferability of concepts and conclusions drawn in this study to other contexts, involves a reflective practice on the part of the reader. Greenwood and Levin (2005) refer to this reflective process as a two-step action where an understanding of the contextual conditions under which meaning was constructed serves as the first step. As the social-cognitive perspective proposes meaning to be context bound, the transfer of meaning from one context to another requires a second step, the development of an understanding of the contextual conditions of the new setting. With an understanding of the different contexts, the reader becomes active in the process of reflection where assessments are made regarding similarities and differences between the contexts and the applicability of concepts and conclusions drawn from the study to the new setting.

To enable the reader to make an informed judgement about the extent to which concepts and conclusions drawn in this study are applicable to other contexts, the research report provides substantial information about the method of inquiry and contextual factors. A highly 'visible' research method (Mishler, 2000) together with the descriptions of the case and context enable the reader to understand precisely how the study was conducted, refining the transferability of findings to situations similar in physical, social and interpersonal contexts. Without clear and detailed descriptions, the reader is unable to assess the degree of similarity between cases.

3.11 Summary

This chapter outlined the research design, setting, methods of data generation, analysis, and phases of the research project. The research occurred within an interpretive case study framework, where I was involved in an extended interaction with the site and participants for the purpose of interpreting and negotiating the multiplicity of meanings in the local context. I adopted a reflective stance throughout the data generation methods to enable a process of continuous interpretation and revision of meaning that shaped the process of inquiry.

The following two chapters present a detailed analysis and discussion of data related to factors that influenced student enrolment behaviour. In Chapter Four, I discuss this data as it relates to the key motivational theories of task values, music self-concept and self-efficacy, and attribution theory, whilst in Chapter Five I provide a discussion of the contextual factors found to influence student elective curriculum choice within this setting.

Chapter Four

Analysis and Discussion: Motivational Factors

4.1 Introduction

This study aimed to identify and provide insight into the nature of the motivational and contextual factors that influenced student classroom music enrolment behaviour within this specific setting of an independent co-educational secondary school in regional New South Wales. This chapter provides a critical analysis and discussion of data related to the key motivational theories of task values, music self-concept and self-efficacy, and attribution theory. It is the first of two chapters aimed at identifying factors that influenced student enrolment behaviour in this setting, with the second chapter, Chapter Five, providing an analysis and discussion of data related to the role of contextual factors in shaping student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum.

The shaded area of Figure 4.1 illustrates the focus of the current chapter with the key motivational themes analysed and discussed according to the following sequence:

4. 2 Task values

4.3 Self-concept and self-efficacy

4.4 Attribution theory

Within each key motivational theory, the analysis is discussed according to the three purposive interview samples. Namely:

1 Students who had elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

2 Students participating in instrumental or vocal music tuition who had not elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

3 Students with limited or no previous instrumental or vocal music tuition who had elected not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

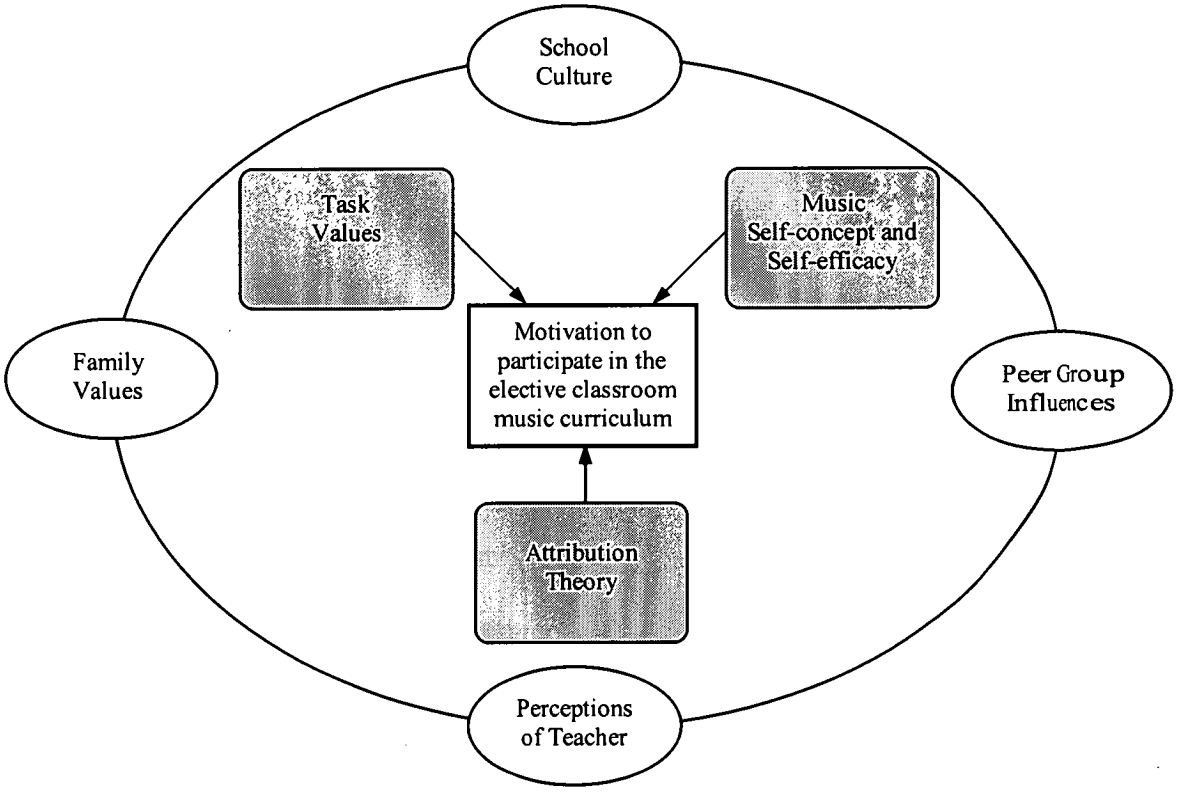

Figure 4.1: Key motivational theories analysed and discussed in Chapter Four

The analysis and discussion draws on data generated through student surveys and student and parent interviews. The survey data served a formative function in the research design, providing a 'snapshot' of the factors, as they existed at the time of the survey in this specific setting, and informing the interview design. The principal data analysis is drawn from the interview. The sensitivity of the interview and its ability to capture the complexity of meaning according to the descriptions of the life world of the respondent provided a richness of data that deepened the level of

understanding of the factors influencing student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum.

4. 2 Task values

To develop a preliminary view of the factors influencing student enrolment behaviour across the full Year Eight cohort, question four of the survey instrument asked students to identify the elective curriculum areas nominated for continued study in Year Nine and provide a reason for the each curriculum choice. Student responses to this question revealed task values to be the greatest influencing factor in student enrolment behaviour, featuring in 82% of student survey responses to question four (Appendix I). Of the students who identified task values to be influential in elective curriculum choice, 66% referred specifically to the intrinsically orientated constructs of personal interest and enjoyment, while 34% referred to a subject's relevance to career aspirations, the Higher School Certificate of Year Eleven and Twelve and desirable life skills.

The influence of intrinsic task values was found to be greatest for curriculum areas perceived to contain practical elements in the learning experiences. The high level of congruence between practical based curriculum areas and intrinsic task values was reflected in student enrolments in Art and Technics. In both curriculum areas, student decisions were not based on any positive utility task values. Other curriculum areas where practically based learning experiences could be attributed to the heightened intrinsic task values included Food Technology, French, Agriculture and Music.

The influence of utility task values was an important factor in student decisions to participate in Commerce, Computer Studies or French. Of the students electing Commerce, 86% referred to utility task values as being influential, while 61% and 47% of students electing Computer Studies and French respectively identified utility task values as important factors in curriculum choice. The influence of utility task values for the remaining seven elective curriculum areas was limited to only 20% of student survey responses.

Table 4.1 summarises student survey data identifying positive intrinsic and utility task values as factors influencing curriculum choice for each of the respective elective curriculum areas.

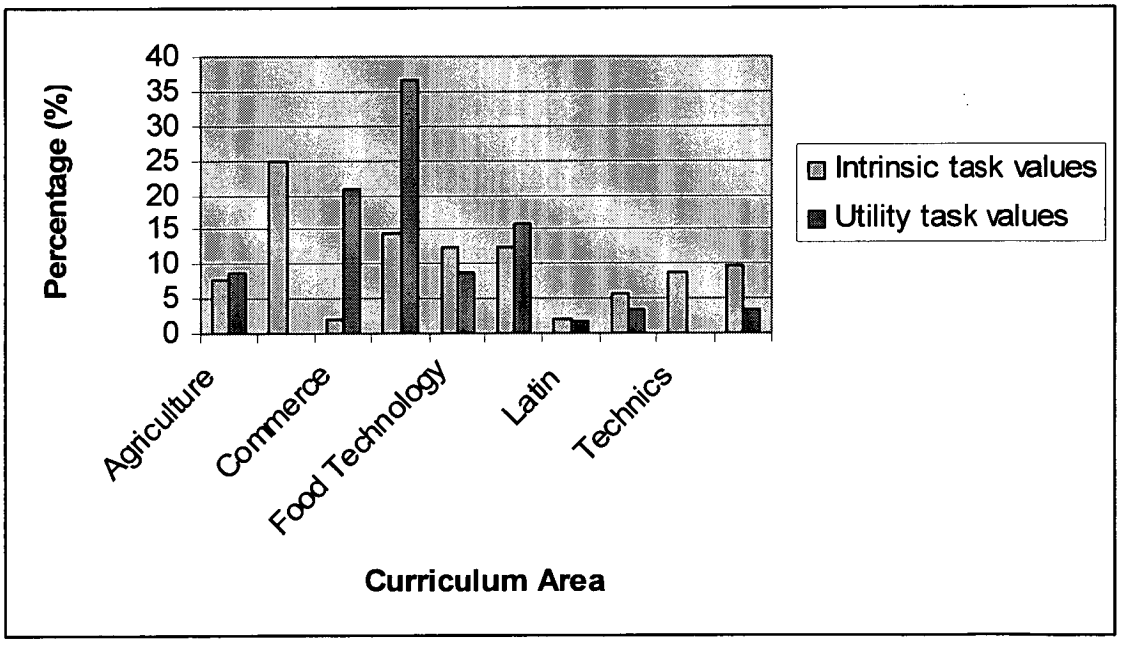

Table 4.1: Task values influencing elective curriculum choice

The high utility task values awarded to Computer Studies and positive intrinsic task values for Art in the student elective curriculum choices were reflected in the large student enrolments in the respective curriculum areas. 44% of the student cohort

elected Computer Studies while 32% elected Art. With only two elective curriculum choices available to students, the high student enrolments in Computer Studies and Art significantly diminished the potential student enrolments in the remaining eight curriculum areas.

4.2.1 Students who had elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Elective music students consistently identified intrinsic task values related to individual interest (Renninger, 2000) as the primary determinant in the decision to participate in the classroom music curriculum.

> MITCHELL: I love listening to music so I really wanted to really know more about it.
>
> . . .
>
> JENNY: It's just interesting ... I just enjoy it.
>
> . . .
>
> ANNIE: I just like music.
>
> . . .
>
> DAVID'S MOTHER: He does genuinely like music; he listens to a lot of music.

Parents further promoted intrinsically orientated constructs as a primary determinant of elective curriculum choice.

> MITCHELL'S FATHER: I say, "What do you really enjoy doing? But maybe you're good at it maybe you're not, but what do you enjoy doing?" And then go from there, particularly for kids who are uncertain as far as career choices are concerned.

David and Annie indicated that their intrinsic interest and enjoyment for music had developed through practical music making experiences beyond the classroom music curriculum. David's intrinsic interest developed through his participation in alto saxophone lessons and performance with the school concert band, while Annie's enjoyment for music had developed through her involvement in co-curricular music ensembles at school.

> ANNIE: With horn, I'm involved in orchestra and that's it. With singing, I'm in the girls' choir, Senior Choir and I'm going to try out for chamber choir.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Do you enjoy being involved in the choirs and bands?
>
> ANNIE: Yep, I find it good. There is always different music as well, see there are some songs that you think, "Oh that's so nice", that you couldn't sing it by yourself. It's a whole different kind of songs and music in choirs.

Jenny's parents described her interest in "music [as] so strong in her mind that she is thinking about music all the time, can't wait to go to the next lesson". Such was Jenny's motivation to participate in music activities, she considered Art as her second elective subject as she understood art to be related to music.

> INTERVIEWER: Why would you like to have done art?
>
> JENNY: It's interesting, well I suppose art is quite a lot linked to music as well, because of history and like all through history art and music people work together kind of thing. It's all the same brain side or something.

As a result of the high level of intrinsic interest and enjoyment in music, three of the five interviewed students electing to participate in the classroom music curriculum had developed positive utility task values related to career aspirations, further enhancing the motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum.

Jenny's explanation of the motivating factor in her nomination of classroom music as an elective subject was simply, "I'm doing music as a career." While Mitchell and Annie's positive utility task values for classroom music were related to career aspirations in drama.

> MITCHELL: Well, if you're acting on stage you have to be very musical. You have to have a musical background. If I went to audition for NIDA [National Institute of Dramatic Art], if I wanted to get in there, I'd have to, 'cause they say it helps a lot to have a musical background.
>
> . . .
>
> INTERVIEWER: What other possibilities have you got for your career selection?
>
> ANNIE: Music. ... I really like acting as well so I think I would go into musical theatre.

Parents reinforced the positive utility task values for classroom music.

> ANNIE'S MOTHER: She was talking about Ag and Art, all those sorts of things which she saw as enjoyment, pleasure subjects, whereas she sees music and Commerce as being subjects for her future. So she's already thinking about the long term.
>
> . . .
>
> JENNY'S MOTHER: The other thing with Jenny, though, is that she does want to do music as a career and she was clear that to do that, she's getting lots of instrumental practice, but she has talked about this, that she wants to back that up with more understanding of music, so she does have career aspirations too that she is seeking in that.
>
> JENNY'S FATHER: She's said she'd like to be a conductor
>
> JENNY'S MOTHER: Being an instrumentalist isn't going to be enough for that, she doesn't think, so she wanted to do the subject.

Paul and Annie had identified three elective curriculum areas that satisfied both intrinsic and utility task values. Their decision to study classroom music as one of the two available elective curriculum areas, and not food technology, was based on their ability to satisfy utility task values through alternative means. Paul identified a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) course that would enable him to pursue a career related goal in the food industry outside of the school timetable.

> PAUL: I picked music 'cause I also looked into the food tech. course, like, Dad asked around, and I wanted to learn, like, how to cook and all the different techniques but what they're doing in food tech. class is learning nutrition, like how you can store foods and all that sort of stuff.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Yes, so...
>
> PAUL: So I think I'm going to be going to TAFE. I'd like to do a cooking class there.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Okay, with a direction in mind or that's just.....
>
> PAUL: Yeah, 'cause I've got a general idea that I want to do something, like, with cooking like in a restaurant or working behind a bar.

Annie indicated that she could develop knowledge and skills at home to accommodate her dietary needs associated with her medical condition.

> ANNIE: I want to learn to cook but then Mum could have helped with cooking at home, I can sort of learn from Mum so I figured that was no use to me.

Shah and Kruglanski (2000) refer to this phenomenon as *means dissociation*, where a "goal's association with a single means is weakened by the presence of other available means" (p. 111).

Figure 4.2 illustrates the means dissociation phenomenon as experienced by Paul with a TAFE Hospitality course providing an alternative means in the satisfaction of his

utility task values for Food Technology, in turn strengthening his motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum.

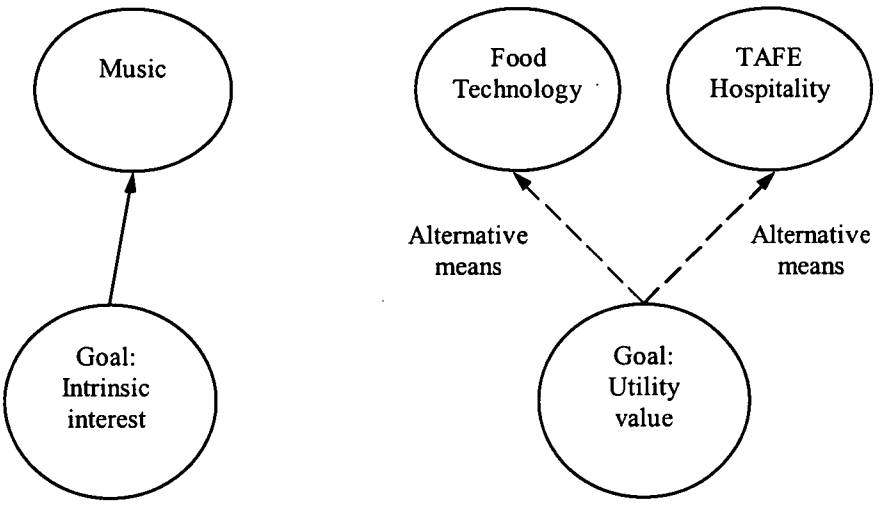

Figure 4.2: Student motivation to participate in an elective curriculum area weakened by the effect of means dissociation

Paul's parents' desire for him to study a broad range of subjects to avoid creating a limited academic pathway too soon in his school education, served to heighten awareness of alternative means.

> INTERVIEWER: What sort of things did you discuss?
>
> PAUL'S MOTHER: Where it would lead you in terms of Year Eleven and Twelve, what sort of things you could pick up later, what sort of things you might be able to do out of the school. We didn't discuss things in terms of future career because in view of Year Nine that seems a little remote, but just looked at keeping as many options available as possible ... and being able to follow his interests.

4.2.2 Students participating in instrumental or vocal music tuition who had not elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

The influence of *means dissociation* (Shah & Kruglanski, 2000), when applied to decisions to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum, was a negative factor for a large group of instrumental and vocal music students. Students electing not to participate in the classroom music curriculum perceived the instrumental and vocal music tuition program and the co-curricular ensemble music program as alternative means towards satisfying positive intrinsic task values for music.

> ANTHONY: Quite a few of my friends play instruments but that is enough for them. They don't want to become, like, play in the Sydney Symphony Orchestra or anything like that. It is enough for them to just be able to play an instrument.

. . .

> RAY: If I want to do music I can just play my instrument and doing musicianship if I wanted to do more music I could do musicianship, that's enough. Unless I wanted to be a teacher or something I don't see any reason why I should, why I need to do music because I get it from just playing the trombone and playing in the orchestra.

To achieve breadth in Ray's educational experiences, his parents encouraged him to pursue his interest in music through the co-curricular program.

> RAY'S MOTHER: You don't want to put all their eggs in one basket of totally developing music. ... We see he is already doing music and musicianship.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Through his lessons and musicianship?
>
> RAY'S MOTHER: And orchestra and band, through four things.

The promotion of the co-curricular program as an alternative to the classroom music curriculum was, in part, a result of the limited elective curriculum choices available.

> RAY'S MOTHER: Music is up there ... he is getting those skills in the music he is doing [outside of the curriculum music program] and the group music he is doing.
>
> RAY'S FATHER: Also in the amount of electives [limiting his ability to nominate music].

The influence of means dissociation was further enhanced with the limited number of elective curriculum choices available as students could only elect to participate in two of the eleven curriculum areas available.

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: His problems arose when he was only allowed to do two electives and he actually wanted one of them to be music.
>
> . . .
>
> ANGUS' MOTHER: He really enjoys music, he loved your classes, he just couldn't, he was very frustrated, very annoyed that he couldn't go on with it. ... Not enough choices.

Allison's parents indicated that they "would like to see her still do [classroom] music", however, the limited number of elective choices available prevented Allison nominating classroom music as one of her two elective choices for Year Nine.

> ALLISON'S MOTHER: We would have preferred for her to do more than two electives.

The existence of a comprehensive instrumental and vocal music tuition program and an extensive co-curricular music ensemble program presented students with alternative practical music making experiences, weakening the role of the elective classroom music curriculum as a means towards the satisfaction of intrinsic task values for music. Figure 4.3 illustrates the effect of means dissociation in the Year Eight cohort, with nine students (11%) electing to participate in the classroom music

curriculum of Year Nine, from fifty-six (68%) students who had demonstrated positive intrinsic task values for music through an active involvement in instrumental and vocal music tuition and/or the co-curricular ensemble music program. While Figure 4.3 has grouped students according to participation rates in each of the three school music activities available, student participation in each of the activities is not mutually exclusive and hence, Figure 4.3 includes student participation in multiple music activities.

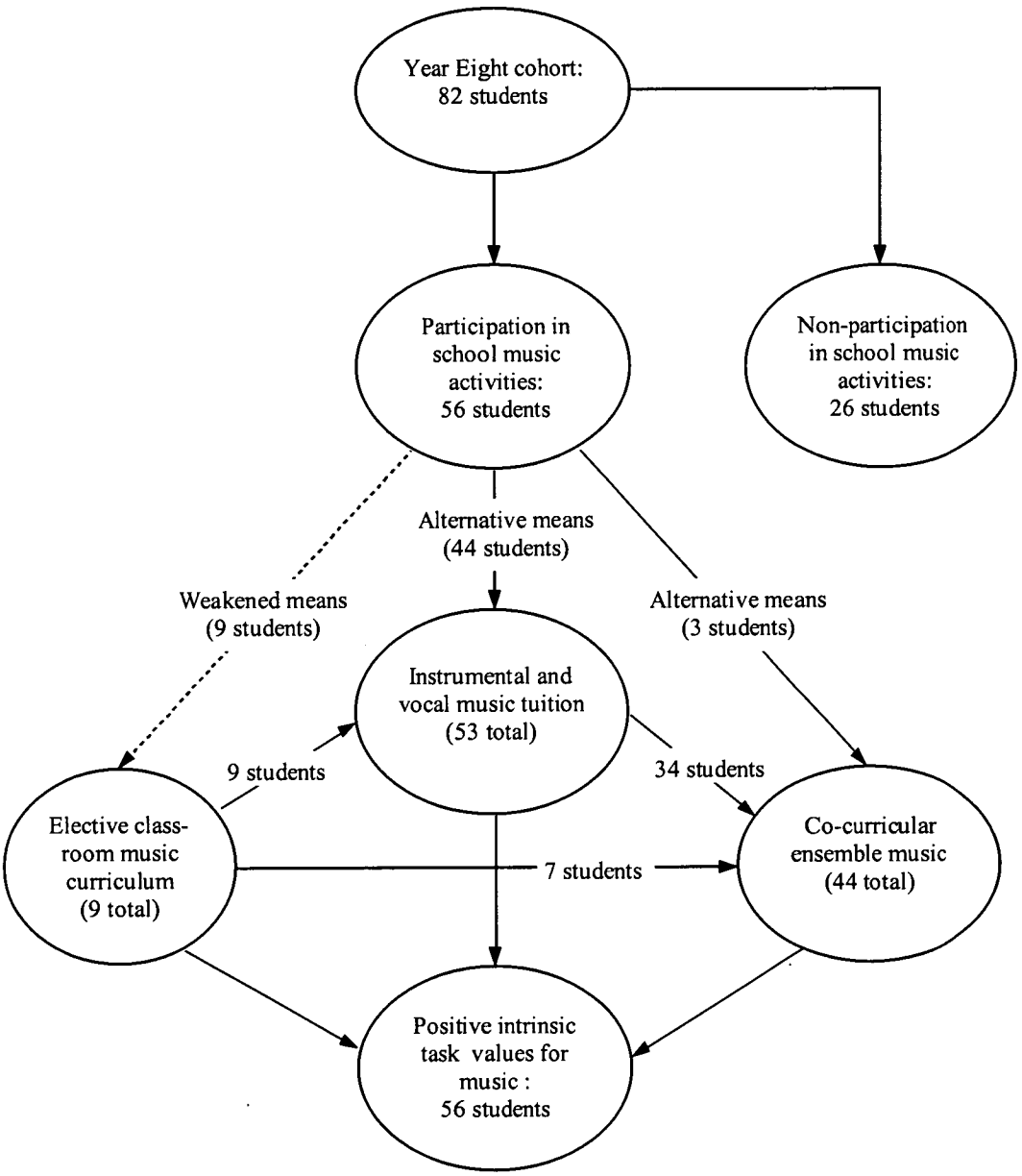

Figure 4.3: Alternative means in the satisfaction of intrinsic task values for music

While 68% of the Year Eight cohort indicated on the student survey that music satisfied the intrinsically orientated constructs of interest and enjoyment, the application of utility task values was reported to be a negative factor when considering the elective classroom music curriculum.

> RAY'S MOTHER: If you don't want to become a musician there is music at the school that they can do through all the other ways of doing music, so encouraging music as part of their lives not necessarily as a career choice. ... And with music, our background thing is, "You're probably not going to end up as a musician and if you are you are going to be poor". What we know is if you're totally arts based you are going to have a tough life.

. . .

> TOM: But I didn't really want to do it that much because I thought that it wouldn't be what I really wanted to be doing when I was older.

Tom's parents reinforced the application of negative utility task values when considering the elective classroom music curriculum. Tom's older brother, Anthony, was cited as being in a similar situation when electing not to participate in the classroom music curriculum on the grounds that it was perceived to be of limited utility value in future applications. Anthony was awarded a credit grading in the grade five Australian Music Examinations Board (A.M.E.B.) trumpet performance examination while in Year Eight at school. Despite Anthony's demonstrated ability and positive intrinsic task values for music, where his mother described him as having a "love of music", negative parental utility values proved more influential than Anthony's positive intrinsic task values for music.

> TOM'S MOTHER: I made him do Latin rather than Music because I think I probably always knew Anthony was never going to be musician but he has a talent for English.

The application of a utility task value orientation with both Tom and his mother appeared to have been unique to the classroom music curriculum. The intrinsically orientated constructs of interest and enjoyment were described as the primary motivation for Tom's decision to nominate Technics as one of his two elective subjects as he "thought it would be a lot of fun".

> TOM'S MOTHER: He wanted to do something with his hands thinking he likes, he will sit and draw, that was something that did appeal to him because that is something he can sit and do for ages.

Intrinsic task values were promoted by parents as primary determinants in student nominations of preferred elective curriculum areas for Year Nine.

> ANTHONY'S MOTHER: Art's a lovely thing to do and so is music. Just go with something you'd enjoy because it's important that you enjoy Year Nine and Ten. ... I want you to have fun because obviously in Years Nine and Ten you should be having fun before you get serious for the HSC work.

. . .

> ANGUS' MOTHER: [He] said he'd prefer to do Latin, he has a passion for that, loves History and really likes Latin.

. . .

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: The constant stream of advice that you get from teachers and previous students is to do what you enjoy. If you're happy and it gives you pleasure you will naturally do well and find it easy to study. So don't try and strategically place yourself in things you know, think [what] might advantage you in some way, just do what you're good at.

While the application of utility task values was reported as a negative factor when considering the elective classroom music curriculum, utility task values for other curriculum areas were reported to be positive, enabling students to satisfy the multiple goals of intrinsic task values and potential utility task values.

> SCOTT: I think it [Computing] will help me in later life because technology is developing very quickly, so I think it will be very important later on, so I decided to become more familiar with computers.

Angus described Latin and World History as satisfying both intrinsic task values and potential utility task values related to the Higher School Certificate of Years Eleven and Twelve.

> ANGUS: With Latin I had to do a bit of asking, like Mr. Stevens who is the Latin teacher, because I will probably want to do that in Year Twelve and I don't want it to be stopped at the end of Year Ten. ... I just said, "Even if there was one person doing Latin in Year Eleven and Twelve, is it still taught?" He said, "Yep, that's fine". He still teaches you. ... There are two histories in Year Eleven and Twelve, there's modern and ancient and I don't know which one I would choose. I would do one of them.

Parental encouragement of the need to consider the potential utility task values of each curriculum area related to the Higher School Certificate also featured as a factor influencing elective curriculum choice.

> ALEX'S MOTHER: Well there's no point, if you're going to take up an elective you have virtually got to follow it through in this school, don't you?

. . .

> ANTHONY'S MOTHER: We discussed, with a few subjects like Music and Art, to do it in year eleven and twelve you really had to do it in years nine and ten. And we, I think for me, I wanted to make sure he recognised the importance of making, if there was any possibility of him going on in those areas, that he do it in years nine and ten.

Angus' parents encouraged the application of utility value constructs to Angus' elective curriculum choice as the study of Latin and World History was congruent with Angus' parents' longer-term utility values related to tertiary studies in the Classics.

> ANGUS' FATHER: I always have in the back of my mind; he may do a Classics degree, that's why it's just perfect.

For each of the interviewed instrumental music students electing not to participate in the classroom music curriculum, positive intrinsic task values for music were based on practical music making activities.

> ANTHONY'S MOTHER: Anthony liked, I think in one of the tasks someone set him, in film music ... he had to compose something with the organ and he enjoyed it and spent a lot of time doing it ... and sings, he sings all the time.

. . .

> RAY: The practical, like with the TV music it was, that was good with the jingles. We did a lot of prac. and generally I found it a lot more enjoyable than just doing straight theory from our books.
>
> INTERVIEWER: What were the things you didn't like doing in music, either Year Seven or Eight?
>
> RAY: Writing in our books, as I said, doesn't seem much fun. To me the idea of music is playing an instrument, that's why I dislike musicianship as well.

With the nature of the co-curricular music program involving primarily practical ensemble music making activities, students were able to satisfy intrinsic task values for music through the co-curricular music program. A negative experience in the co-curricular music program, however, could diminish a student's motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum.

RAY: Orchestra is a bit of a, it's all right. It is getting a bit on the boring side now that I'm the only trombone there.

INTERVIEWER: You need more trombones?

RAY: Yeah, basically, yeah very, very boring. Probably I would just prefer to just do stage band. I don't think you are allowed to. I enjoy that a lot more.

Ray's description of his experiences in the school orchestra as being "very boring", appeared unique to this ensemble and were related to his perceptions of the orchestral repertoire, particularly when compared to the repertoire performed by the school stage band. Consistent with Ray's experience, Scott's mother described her older son, Paul, as having a less positive experience in the school orchestra when compared to other activities available to the students in Year Eight.

SCOTT'S MOTHER: Part of Paul's motivation to leave orchestra is a sense of, you know, it's a very dry, there is no nourishment, there's no life, there's no fun. And when their lives are so full you really have to, you have to ...

INTERVIEWER: Capture their interest?

SCOTT'S MOTHER: You do. Because there are too many competing things and it's just too easy to give it away. It's not giving enough back in return.

When discussing the non-elective classroom music curriculum, Scott described the "practical hands-on kind of stuff" and "making music spontaneously to something" as being "fantastic". Despite positive intrinsic task values for the classroom music curriculum and Scott's achievement at a very high level in the classroom music curriculum, his decision not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum was based on less positive intrinsic task values related to the co-curricular music program.

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: You see the real decision for Scotty came much earlier in relation to music and that was when in Year Seven in the orchestra and the point at which he knew he had to make a decision between cadets and orchestra was the real threshold for him. And his decision was partly mediated by Paul's [older brother] experiences in orchestra being a boy, except Paul is a string's boy. That makes it harder.

4.2.3 Students with limited or no previous instrumental or vocal music tuition who had elected not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Despite the majority of students being unable to nominate a preferred career at the time of elective curriculum choice, perceived utility values for particular curriculum areas remained significant in decisions to participate, or otherwise, in respective curriculum areas.

Elizabeth elected to study Agriculture and World History as she perceived both subjects to be of some utility value. World History was perceived to be "better for general knowledge and teaching" and her desire "to own [her] own farm and live on a property" would be served by the study of Agriculture.

Alex acknowledged the influence of career related factors when electing curriculum areas to study; explaining how students generally were less motivated to elect subjects of limited career related utility value.

> ALEX: Most people choose, like Latin for example, that they'll never use it so what's the point of studying it if they're never going go to Latin or speak Latin, go to Italy or speak Latin, or do French or anything like that, something that's not going to be necessarily useful for getting a good job.

Sophie, having identified Art, French and World History as curriculum areas of intrinsic interest, considered the utility value of each curriculum area, particularly as they may be applied to curriculum choices for the Higher School Certificate. Her decision to choose Art in preference to World History was based on her understanding of the prerequisites for the respective curriculum areas in the Senior School.

> SOPHIE: Yeah and choosing between World History and Art was hard and it took me a while to figure it out but I thought World History you can, you don't have to do World History in Years Nine and Ten to pick it up in Year Eleven. Whereas Art you have to do Nine and Ten to do Eleven and Twelve.

Sophie also understood the French curriculum to be developmental and as such, the acquisition of skills was cumulative. To satisfy her utility goal of travelling to France, she would need to participate in the elective curriculum in order to develop the necessary language skills.

> SOPHIE: I like the idea of learning a language and I want to go to France and Europe. I just really like it. The only language we did in the Prep School was Japanese. I don't really want to go to Japan so I don't find any use in that so. French is good.
>
> INTERVIEWER: And Latin is the only other one that you've done.
>
> SOPHIE: I don't like Latin. It's good to improve your English and everything but there is nowhere where you can go and use it. You can't like go and have experience talking Latin to people because no one would use it.

Teachers were reported to have promoted utility value constructs as significant factors in elective curriculum choice to both students and parents, specifically utility values as they may be applied to subject selection for Year Eleven and Twelve.

> ALLISON'S FATHER: There seemed to be a lot of pressure on the people, with Year Eight selections, to almost be thinking about what they are going to be doing in the HSC. That was the nature of the discussion. In some subjects, for example, teachers were making a plea that well you can't just enrol in

> French in Years Eleven and Twelve, for argument's sake. ... There were issues of needing to take account in your Year Eight selections of what options you might want to have available to you in Years Eleven and Twelve. ... I found that and a number of other parents at that forum [subject information day] commented on that. They felt really hemmed in, in relation to Year Eleven and Twelve decisions by their Year Eight subject selections.
>
> INTERVIEWER: And that came about from what the teachers were saying?
>
> ALLISON'S FATHER: The teachers and the person from the Board [NSW Board of Studies]. ... This situation is sort of emerging where people think, "Oh I had better take Commerce because I want to do Economics. I had better do this because I want to do that." ... Being streamed in Year Eight almost into a semi-career pathway and I just don't think if you asked people that, that's what they want.

Alex's father was a senior member of staff at the school and involved in the administration of the elective subject selection process. While discussing his son's task values, he revealed his perceptions of the factors that influence student elective subject decision-making generally as they related to task values.

> ALEX'S FATHER: Most of them do things that they enjoy and there's a lot of parent pressure that says maybe you shouldn't be doing a subject like Art, which you are doing for fun, for enjoyment, for learning, for new experiences, well you just can't do the sort of nourishment with two elective subjects. You can't do that because it is enjoyable and not rigorous enough and maybe there are some things, by doing the third elective that the kids could have tried.

Alex's father's perception, that students generally applied intrinsic task values to decisions regarding elective curriculum areas, while parents encouraged utility value constructs to maximise student goals, was generally consistent with the interview data.

> INTERVIEWER: Why did Elizabeth want to do Commerce?
>
> ELIZABETH'S MOTHER: Because ... it is new and it sounds cool and interesting. ... I did say that if she wanted to be a teacher it [History and Geography] would be of more use to her than Commerce.

. . .

ALEX'S MOTHER: In making your choices now you are almost forced to think about what this child is going to do for the rest of his life.

The contrasting role of task values between Alex and his parents was highlighted with Alex's decision to elect Computer Studies. His parents perceived Computer Studies to be of limited utility value in future subject selections for the Higher School Certificate of Years Eleven and Twelve, while Latin, French and World History were promoted as each served as prerequisites for continued study in the Higher School Certificate. In addition to the perception of limited utility value, Alex's parents identified time spent on a computer at home as an alternative means in the achievement of Alex's intrinsic task values. The limit of two elective curriculum choices reinforced the effect of means dissociation.

ALEX'S MOTHER: Well he always had Computing in mind and then.

ALEX'S FATHER: As a personal, he had an interest in it so he wants to do that personally.

ALEX'S MOTHER: But he knew that I wouldn't approve, or you [father] probably don't either, and so that was half his choices done. And so there was a big discussion because there's only one left to choose and I wanted him to do lots of things. I didn't want him to do Computing at all ...

ALEX'S FATHER: He'd pick it up at home.

ALEX'S MOTHER: I mean because he has an interest in it and he subscribes to the computer magazines and reads them from cover to cover and spends a lot of time on the computer that he would have that anyway.

With utility value constructs featuring significantly in the non-instrumental music students' elective curriculum choices, the perception that the elective classroom music

curriculum was of limited utility value proved to be a significant negative influence in the decision to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

> INTERVIEWER: How relevant do you think music is to your future in general?
>
> ALEX: It would be good to have a knowledge of music in later life, probably not career so much, more for entertainment.
>
> . . .
>
> ALLISON: I like music but I don't think I have a career in doing it so I'd probably choose World History ... I think if you're really interested in being a musician or playing an instrument.
>
> . . .
>
> INTERVIEWER: How important do you think music is going to be in your life, in the future?
>
> BEN: I don't think it will be, just listening to it is what I'll be doing. I don't think I'll be playing it.

The music course was perceived only to be of benefit to those students who were taking instrumental music lessons concurrently. Sophie suggested that all non-instrumental students felt that the course was irrelevant "Unless you play a musical instrument or you happen to be good at it".

> SOPHIE: Why do we have to do this if we don't play a musical instrument? It's not going to help us in Year Nine, Ten, Eleven or Twelve. Knowing music isn't really going to help us. ... I didn't understand why we had to learn it, which is, that's what most people think, "Why do we have to do this when we don't like doing it and we don't understand why we have to do it?"

With intrinsically orientated constructs rating highly on the student surveys as factors influencing elective curriculum choice, an examination of the elements of the classroom music curriculum students perceived to be the source of student enjoyment

and interest was required. Students with little or no previous instrumental music experience frequently cited the practical music making activities as enjoyable.

> ELIZABETH: Creating music, composing music and the video clips I enjoyed doing, making our dances and songs and things.

. . .

> ALLISON: Yeah, I found it [music] really fun. ... We made ads and did this thing on tape and it was cool. We loved making it to a beat and putting it all to music. I really enjoyed that.

In contrast to the positive role of performance based activities in enhancing student intrinsic task values, written tasks related to musical notation and characteristics of musical styles diminished student enjoyment of classroom music learning experiences.

> INTERVIEWER: How did you find music in Year Seven and Eight?
>
> BEN: I enjoyed it. ... Year Seven I enjoyed more, I don't know why, probably because in Year Eight there was a bit more theory in it.
>
> INTERVIEWER: What did you like in Year Seven that was fun, that you can remember?
>
> BEN: In Year Seven we did more practical things, I really like the practical things.
>
> INTERVIEWER: The practical things were like what?
>
> BEN: Playing the instruments.
>
> INTERVIEWER: And what did you like in Year Eight music?
>
> BEN: Where we had to make the music, we had to make the music for one of the scenes in a movie.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Do you think everyone enjoyed it?
>
> BEN: Yeah, I think they did.

While Sophie attended a different Year Eight music class to Ben, her perception that all students in her music class enjoyed the practical based learning experiences more than written work related to the theory of music was consistent with Ben's observation.

> SOPHIE: Like everyone loved going, we all liked going to the keyboard room and playing the piano that was good. That was everyone's favourite lessons.
>
> INTERVIEWER: What about whether it was actually, it was good fun, like the lessons with the keyboard were good fun but some of the other things?
>
> SOPHIE: Weren't so, like writing down all the theory. Last year we put music to film, that was good. They liked all the practical bits where you just make a lot of noise, but the writing is a bit because we didn't understand why and ...
>
> INTERVIEWER: Did you find it hard?
>
> SOPHIE: Not really. A little bit.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Not just quite interesting enough.
>
> SOPHIE: Yeah.

The identification of practical music making activities as the source of intrinsically orientated constructs for classroom music was consistent across the three student interview samples and highlighted the potential role of instrumental and vocal music tuition in the development and enhancement of intrinsic task values related to music. With the significance of intrinsically orientated task values as a factor in student elective curriculum choice generally, students with limited or no instrumental music experience outside of the classroom music curriculum had considerably less opportunity to participate in practical music making activities and hence develop positive intrinsic task values for music. The learning experiences of the non-elective

classroom music curriculum of Year Seven and Year Eight were evenly divided between performing, composing and listening. With one-third of the learning experiences consisting of performance activities and a limited period allocation of three, forty-minute lessons per fortnight. The opportunities for students to participate in performance based music activities may have been insufficient to develop positive intrinsically orientated constructs identified as a consequence of practical music making activities.

The perception that students need to play a musical instrument for the elective classroom music curriculum to be relevant, together with the potential for practical music making activities to enhance intrinsic motivation, introduced a financial element not applicable to a number of other elective curriculum areas. The element of cost, related to instrumental and vocal music tuition, was raised as a prohibitive factor by a small group of parents.

> SOPHIE'S MOTHER: Music. She was playing flute at the time. ... She did comment on taking up the flute but as I said, extra money. ... And she was good at it, and I actually looked into it. I went down to [the music shop] one day to see if I could, I was going to rent one, I think, or buy one. I really wanted her to take it on but I was looking at my finances.
>
> . . .
>
> ALEX'S MOTHER: Alexander was the first one through and in those years where he should have been learning we just didn't have the money for it.
>
> ALEX'S FATHER: Well what has actually happened he has stayed in the choir.
>
> ALEX'S MOTHER: Yeah and I said, "You know the choir is free and that is sort of some music that you're going to be getting".
>
> . . .

DAVID'S MOTHER: He'd dearly love to have piano lessons again now, but you know the cost side.

. . .

RAY'S MOTHER: With [the school] fees, and three of them there, and it's huge, and that's even with scholarships and everything else. It was like, "Oh we've got another one". So we'd been putting it off. Once again, he picked violin as the instrument he wanted to play. It was like, "Oh God, another one has picked another instrument, I can't believe it". ... The difficulty with [the school] is you've got a whole, huge commitment to paying fees and if the kid does nothing, it was just a whim, you know, a huge amount of money that you've got to keep paying.

While Allison's parents held positive task values for music in each of their children's education, Allison had not received the same musical opportunities as her older sisters as cost became an increasingly prohibitive factor.

ALLISON'S FATHER: The fees!

ALLISON'S MOTHER: It was horrendous with five children.

ALLISON'S FATHER: It was horrendous, yeah. I suppose we wouldn't have felt the cost pressure as much if we thought the kids were really into it. That this was something that was important to them, but paying on a termly basis for kids who were reluctant to practice, they just made it to their lessons and that was all they did in a week and we had already been through that experience, in a sense, with piano lessons.

INTERVIEWER: With Allison?

ALLISON'S MOTHER: No, Allison has kind, in a sense, suffered a bit. ... We got a sundries bill from the School for $5000 and we just about died. So we had to rethink, so obviously music being in the sundries category was a huge, and we couldn't hop over it. So then we had to say we can't afford it any longer. ... I feel a bit guilty about that, not having the same kind of opportunity.

While Alex enjoyed the Rock Music topic and the practical activities associated with music for film and television, his limited interest in the classroom music curriculum

could be attributed, in part, to the distinction he placed between classroom music and the music he enjoyed outside of the school curriculum.

> INTERVIEWER: You really enjoy the singing, the sound of the music in general.
>
> ALEX: Yeah music in general, not so much like the music that would be taught in music class.

The limited interest in the classroom music curriculum was inconsistent with Alex's interest in music technology and the enjoyment that he gained from participating in a school choir. Alex's parents described how "Alexander was really interested in the ... rock 'n' roll industry", and how he watched a documentary series on the history of Australian Rock Music "week after week and loved it". His interest in non-school music was such that despite having little interest in participating in the elective classroom music curriculum, he held aspirations towards a career in the music industry as a sound technician and was particularly interested in music technology and skills associated with being a disc jockey.

> ALEX: There's probably a curiosity that I've had for the last couple of years would be what it would be like to be a disc jockey or a DJ with the turntables. But they never seem to talk about that on anything and like although you can listen to it on the radio it's never taught as any aspect really.

Alex's musical interest in non-school music, particularly technology, is consistent with wider trends amongst adolescent students (Larson, 1995). North, Hargreaves and O'Neill (2000) identified the importance of music in the lives of adolescents and that this development of musical interests occurs outside of the school curriculum at a time when students' positive attitudes towards school music are diminishing (North, Hargreaves, & O'Neill, 2000).

4.2.4 Summary of findings related to task values

While positive task values were found to be significant factors influencing student elective curriculum choice, the application of task values was found to be inconsistent according to the varying nature of each curriculum area. The influence of intrinsic task values was found to be greatest for curriculum areas perceived to contain a significant practical element in the learning experiences and was reflected in student enrolments in Art, Technics, Food Technology, French and Agriculture. While intrinsic task values were reported to be significant in student decisions to participate in music, the presence of a co-curricular ensemble music program and the availability of instrumental and vocal music tuition at the school, presented students with alternative means through which to satisfy intrinsic task values for performance based music activities, diminishing student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum. The influence of means dissociation was further enhanced with each student limited to two of eleven elective curriculum areas available. This limitation promoted a need for music to satisfy multiple goals if the elective classroom music curriculum was to be nominated as a preferred elective curriculum area.

Where students had identified more than two elective curriculum areas satisfying intrinsic task values, students and parents further discriminated between the curriculum areas according to the perceived utility task value of each curriculum area. The perception that the elective classroom music curriculum was of limited utility value proved to be a significant negative influence in the decision to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine, while curriculum areas that were reported to have positive utility task value enabled students to satisfy the multiple

goals of intrinsic task values and potential utility task values. This phenomenon appeared unique to the classroom music curriculum with students indicating intrinsic task values alone were sufficient to motivate students to nominate a number of non-music curriculum areas.

Figure 4.4 summarises the influence of task values in student elective curriculum choice with student perceptions of limited utility value for the classroom music curriculum serving to further weaken the influence of positive intrinsic task values. Where a student is able to satisfy the multiple goals of intrinsic task values and potential utility task values, motivation to participate in the specific curriculum area is enhanced.

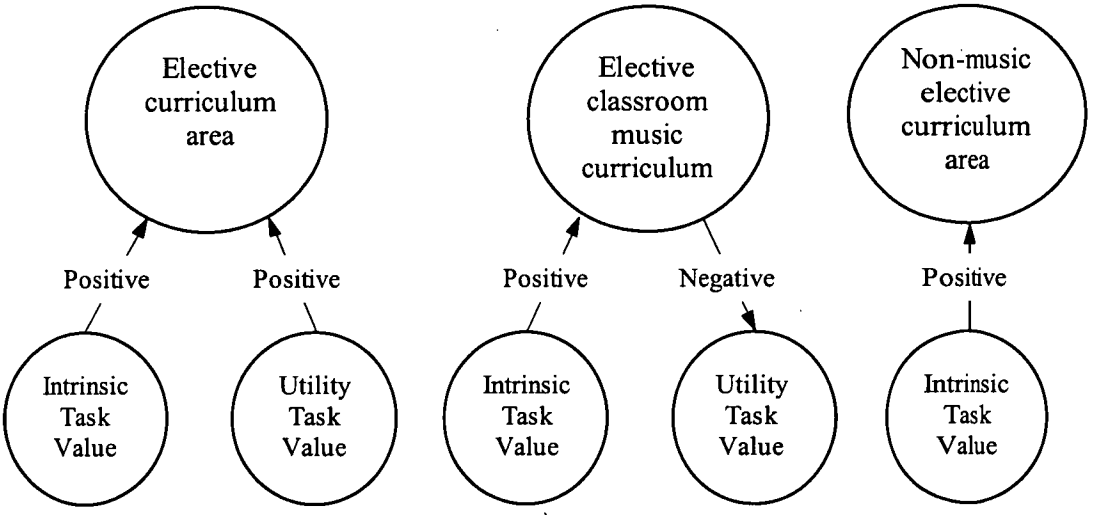

Figure 4.4: Task values as factors influencing elective curriculum choice

4.3 Self-concept and self-efficacy

Academic self-concept was found to be a contributing factor in student elective curriculum choice with survey data highlighting domain specific links between a student's sense of competence and preferred elective curriculum areas. The influence

of domain specific academic self-concept on student elective curriculum choice was most evident with student perceptions of low ability. Evidence supporting the correlation between poor domain specific academic self-concept and poor levels of participation in respective elective curriculum areas was found with student responses to questions three (Appendix H) and four (Appendix I) on the student survey. In all cases where students experienced limited success or perceived a curriculum area to be difficult, the same curriculum area was not considered as a possible elective curriculum choice, irrespective of potential positive utility task values. Further evidence of the link between student task values and academic self-concept was found with student responses to question one in the survey, where domain specific academic self-concept was reported to have been a contributing factor in the development of positive intrinsic task values for curriculum areas in 22% of student responses (Appendix F). This link between student task values and academic self–concept is consistent with the educational research literature reporting positive domain specific self-concept increases the likelihood of a student taking more advanced coursework in the same curriculum area (Marsh & Yeung, 1997a; 1997b; Yeung, Chui & Lau, 1999).

Of the eighty-two students in the Year Eight cohort, fifty-six of whom were participating in school based music activities at the time of this study, only twelve students reported positive perceptions of ability in classroom music. The low number of students reporting positive perceptions of ability in music when responding to question two of the survey demanded further investigation through student and parent interviews. An analysis and discussion of the factors that contributed to student

perceptions of musical ability and the frames of reference employed by students is provided below.

4.3.1 Students who had elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Student music self-concept was closely associated with music curriculum enrolment behaviour, with each of the five interviewed elective music students reporting high self-perceptions of music ability relative to the Year Eight cohort and indicating that the non-elective classroom music curriculum provided little challenge.

INTERVIEWER: Did you choose music for any reason?

DAVID: Because I'm all right at it, quite good at it.

. . .

ANNIE: I just like music and I'm good at it.

. . .

PAUL: I knew most of the stuff already so it was [short pause] I found it fairly easy.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: Why did he want to do music?

PAUL'S MOTHER: I think he perceives that he's fairly good at what he's doing, gets some positive feedback.

. . .

JENNY'S FATHER: We would probably say that she thought the course was too easy.

JENNY'S MOTHER: But she liked that.

JENNY'S FATHER: She didn't mind it. She gained respect from the other students, they'd always ask her ...

INTERVIEWER: Was she bored?

JENNY'S FATHER: I don't think she's ever bored doing anything in music.

The influence of music self-concept as a factor in elective classroom music curriculum choice was reinforced by parents who advocated music as a desirable curriculum choice based on positive perceptions of their child's ability in music. Significantly, parents described positive perceptions of student ability in music together with positive intrinsically orientated constructs of enjoyment. The reference to both positive music self-concept and intrinsic enjoyment for music highlighted a potential link between the two constructs with perceived competence potentially promoting intrinsically orientated constructs of enjoyment through a sense of mastery or efficacy.

INTERVIEWER: What sort of things did you talk about?

MITCHELL'S MOTHER: Things that he was good at because we just felt that if it was something he was good at, something he enjoyed, then he would do a lot better at it than us saying, no, we think you should do this, for this reason. ... Well, he has a very good ear for music. He'll listen to a song on the radio and sing it back to you several days later.

MITCHELL'S FATHER: Then he'll go to his keyboard and just work through ...

MITCHELL'S MOTHER: Just pick it out.

INTERVIEWER: So is it fair to say that he perceives some ability and he enjoys those things? [Elective choices of Music and Technics]

MITCHELL'S MOTHER: Definitely.

MITCHELL'S FATHER: Exactly.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: What sort of things did you discuss?

DAVID'S MOTHER: Why he wanted to do things, and I emphasised he wanted to do something that he was going to enjoy. And that he could achieve at.

INTERVIEWER: Things that he would be good at.

DAVID'S MOTHER: Yes, yeah.

. . .

JENNY'S FATHER: I guess one of our other things that we've wanted to encourage individuals in whatever they're good at.

Jenny, who placed first in classroom music for the full Year Eight cohort, modestly described her ability in music as "good compared to some of the people in our class". The role of academic self-concept on Jenny's elective curriculum choices was more apparent in her second elective curriculum choice where her low art self-concept influenced her decision not to participate in the elective curriculum, despite an intrinsic interest in art.

JENNY: I'm not good at Art, I enjoy it but I'm not good at it.

INTERVIEWER: Is that why you chose not to?

JENNY: Yep because other people are like good at it and stuff, I didn't want to fail miserably.

David enjoyed the non-elective classroom music curriculum despite some frustrations caused by disruptive classmates. His understanding was that the non-elective classroom music curriculum was not a typical reflection of the nature of the elective classroom music curriculum through the experiences of an older sister who had

studied elective music and a perception that the elective music class would not include those students who had been disruptive in Year Eight.

> INTERVIEWER: And you still chose to do music as an elective, now how come you chose to do music as an elective?
>
> DAVID: Because I knew I wouldn't have that class.

While each of the interviewed students electing to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine reported positive music self-concepts, the perception that the elective classroom music curriculum would provide greater challenge was significant in student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

> INTERVIEWER: It didn't put you off? You thought doing elective music would be a little bit more interesting?
>
> PAUL: Yes 'cause I knew that ... well I sort of had a guess that most of the people who would be doing it would know a bit about music or would want to learn it if they didn't know so much, so I thought it would be a bit harder and more interesting than it was before.

The need for the elective curriculum to offer appropriate levels of challenge is consistent with the 'flow' construct (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). According to the 'flow' construct, students who were not challenged by the non-elective classroom music curriculum are unlikely to be motivated to continue participating in the classroom music curriculum if they perceive personal ability to exceed that required to complete tasks, leading to boredom. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) discusses the phenomenological experiences of learning based around the intrinsic pleasure experienced by the learner as a result of developing competence and the sense of personal satisfaction that accompanies the mastering of a sufficiently challenging task. That is, if a sense of

intrinsic pleasure can be derived from a successful experience, an optimal degree of challenge would produce the greatest personal satisfaction.

> BEN'S MOTHER: You're going to loose the interest of some of those kids if they're proficient at music when you're teaching the basics. ... I know Ben has been frustrated by that sort of thing in all subjects.

Evidence of the 'flow' construct's influence on elective curriculum choice was found with Jenny's elective curriculum choices generally. Jenny's parents described how she had overlooked some curriculum areas despite ability in the areas.

> JENNY'S MOTHER: There were other subjects that were easier for her, perhaps easier, but she wasn't interested in them.

Jenny's parents recognised a need for Jenny to be challenged if she was to maintain interest and motivation.

> JENNY'S MOTHER: We wanted a subject that wasn't going to be too hard but also wanted a subject that wasn't going to be too easy that she'd be bored with it because if she's bored she's not going to do very well either, but it was really getting a subject that was kind of interesting.

Music self-concept was described in relation to the perceived musical abilities of other students with these social comparisons providing normative information with which to then judge personal abilities in music. The role of social comparison in the development of a music self-concept with students who elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine was highlighted when a change in the frame of reference resulted in a change in music self-concept. This was evident in a change in Mitchell's self-perceptions of music ability according to comparisons of standards between himself and non-elective music classmates in Year Eight, and comparisons of standards between himself and the music students who formed the

small Year Nine elective music class. Consistent with the *big-fish-little-pond-effect* proposed by Marsh and Craven (2000), the changes in the frames of reference brought about changes in Mitchell's music self-concept.

> MITCHELL: In Year Seven and Eight I was all right. Now that I'm doing elective music all the people that are really good at elective music have actually chosen that so I'm kind of at the lower end. I still enjoy it a lot but I'm not quite as talented as some of the other people in the class.

According to the *big-fish-little-pond-effect,* the lower perception of ability developed in Year Nine, as a result of social comparison with the more able music student group, may become influential at the next stage of curriculum choice when students elect areas of study for Higher School Certificate in Years Eleven and Twelve.

David's music self-concept was a positive factor in his decision to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum with his mother suggesting he perceived himself to have a bit of a 'flair' for music. The potential, however, for David to employ a different frame of reference from that of his peer group in the Year Eight non-elective music cohort, one that was likely to produce less favourable comparisons of musical ability, existed with his family's strong background in music. His father was employed as a secondary school music teacher, his mother passed the seventh grade A.M.E.B. performance examination on piano as a secondary school student, and his older sister had received her Associate Diploma from the A.M.E.B. on piano as a Year Eleven student at the time David was considering elective curriculum choices for Year Nine.

> DAVID'S MOTHER: That really surprised me [decision to elect music], 'cause I thought he would compare himself with Annie, because he usually does.

David's awareness of potentially unfavourable comparisons of music ability with his older sister was evident when he referred to the amount of time she spent practicing and an expectation that he practice equally as hard.

> INTERVIEW: Practicing, is that hard work?
>
> DAVID: Sometimes because my sister practices so much, so we are kind of expected to practice the same amount of time.
>
> INTERVIEW: There's a bit of comparison?
>
> DAVID: Yeah, Annie is always going on about how much she practiced.

The expectations for musical practice and the nature of the family member's musical experiences appear to create a family dynamic where participation and a level of achievement in music are expected of David. Consistent with Davidson and Borthwick's (2002) findings, the application of family script theory (Byng-Hall, 1985) to musical development was influential as the perceptions and expectations held by family members acted as 'scripts' for predetermined musical behaviours that shaped David's behaviour and musical development.

Family expectations and comparisons between the amounts of music practice between siblings promoted potentially unfavourable comparisons of musical ability with David's older sister. These unfavourable comparisons appeared significant in David's limited application of effort towards his music studies, despite his enjoyment of music and favourable comparisons of musical ability with non-elective music classmates. Turner (2000) describes the intentional withdrawal of effort as a self-concept protection strategy consistent with failure-avoidant patterns of behaviour including self-handicapping. David's limited practice efforts could serve as a handicap, enabling

him to discount a poor or unsuccessful performance due to a lack of effort as opposed to ability, while a successful performance, with minimal effort, could be seen to reflect an ability attribute and further enhance his positive music self-concept. A poor performance following a high level of effort, however, would threaten David's positive music self-concept as it might suggest low levels of musical ability (Covington & Omelich, 1985).

> DAVIDS' MOTHER: He said to me after his performance, he said, "Oh imagine what I'd do if I practiced all the time" ... and he says that after his exams and everything.

David's withdrawal of effort leading up to a performance examination reinforces the findings of McCormick and McPherson (2003), where musical practice and cognitive mediational processes interact to influence musical achievement. In McCormick and McPherson's (2003) study, self-perceptions of musical ability and perceptions of ability to perform the skills necessary to achieve in a performance situation were found to serve as clear predictors of actual performance in achievement settings.

4.3.2 Students participating in instrumental or vocal music tuition who had not elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Interview data gathered from four of the five interviewed students revealed the significance of social comparison on the formation of an individual's music self-concept, with student perceptions of ability being described in relation to more able music students in the same cohort or older siblings. The use of students identified as having achieved at relatively high levels in performance music as a frame of reference acted as a negative influence on student motivation to elect classroom music.

Anthony's previous instrumental music experience of three years instruction on the double bass, where he had achieved at a third grade A.M.E.B. performance level, and two years instruction on the electric organ was described as the reason he perceived the non-elective Year Eight classroom music curriculum to be "pretty easy". Despite the limited challenges experienced in the non-elective classroom music curriculum, Anthony's perceptions of his musical ability were based on social comparisons with students he perceived to have considerably more musical ability.

> ANTHONY: I was all right. I wasn't anything special. Like I ... no, I was all right. I didn't have a special gift like all the other brilliant people in music who are doing music this year. I could understand a fair bit about music and that sort of stuff, so I wasn't too bad.

Anthony's parents suggested that the levels of performance required for favourable comparisons of musical ability with students electing classroom music were at approximately grades six and seven in performance from the Australian Music Examinations Board.

> INTERVIEWER: Why did he decide not to continue with music?
>
> ANTHONY'S MOTHER: I don't think Anthony felt he could do music. Like he wasn't enough of a muso.
>
> ANTHONY'S FATHER: He wasn't up to level six or seven and all this sort of thing.

Anthony's perception of the elective music students as being "brilliant" was consistent with Mitchell's observation when he described his elective music classmates as "really finely tuned musos". The reference of one's own perceptions of musical ability with students perceived to be performing at high levels in instrumental music was also evident in both Ray and his mother's understanding of the nature of student enrolment

in the classroom music curriculum. The identification of high performance standards as a frame of reference to assess one's own music ability produced a diminished music self-concept and served as a negative influence in the decision making process.

> RAY: Well I'd say I'm pretty good at the practical side and the theoretical side I'd say pretty average. Depends on what standards because I do musicianship and for my grade I'm probably ok at that but overall I'm not that good.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Depends who you're comparing [with]?
>
> RAY: Yeah.
>
> . . .
>
> RAY'S MOTHER: If you're going to be a professional musician you do music because you have got to compete against people who are passionate in music and conservatorium standard type stuff.

Ray's mother's perception that students electing classroom music had high levels of musical ability had been based on Ray's older brother's experience of the elective classroom music curriculum where his music self-concept had been diminished as a result of unfavourable social comparisons with other students in the elective music class. The subsequent diminished music self-concept contributed to his decision to withdraw from the elective classroom music curriculum following one semester of study.

> RAY'S MOTHER: I don't think he likes not being at the top of the group. Anthony [Ray's brother] runs away from, "I mustn't be great".

The potential for unfavourable comparisons of musical ability with older siblings, reported by David's mother in Section 4.3.1, was amplified with Tom's and Ray's experiences where similar social comparisons presented a significant negative factor. Despite both Tom and Ray reporting positive intrinsic task values for music and

achieving at high levels in instrumental music and the non-elective classroom music curriculum of Year Eight, both students elected not to participate in the classroom music curriculum.

> TOM'S MOTHER: He just said he enjoyed, he actually quite liked doing music but he knew he couldn't do it as an elective because he never got past third grade or something.
>
> INTERVIEWER: He probably could have been compared with Belinda and Anthony who were very advanced.
>
> TOM'S MOTHER: Yeah and he wasn't.
>
> . . .
>
> RAY'S MOTHER: Ray came along to it [music] and said, "No", because he looks, is he as good as Anthony or not as good as Anthony? How did that go?
>
> RAY'S FATHER: It would have been the influence to the extent that, "Well he did it so I'm not going to do it", or, "He did really well so I don't think I will do that one".

Angus' elective choices of Latin and History reflected strongly his parent's perceptions of his high level of ability and interest in each of these subjects.

> ANGUS' FATHER: I was very keen for him to do Latin because I thought he would be very good, which he is, he is topping Latin.
>
> ANGUS' MOTHER: He always has really, same with History too. He is very, very good at History.

Angus's perceptions of ability were reported to be significantly higher in Latin and history, as opposed to music. The differences in his domain specific academic self-concepts appeared to influence his decision to continue his studies in Latin and History and not Music.

> ANGUS: I'm seriously considering doing music as an elective but I just chose the ones I'm doing at the moment.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think you were good at classroom music?

ANGUS: I was okay, I wasn't particularly good at it, but I wasn't too bad. I was just okay.

Students' lower perceptions of ability when compared to other curriculum areas diminished the influence of positive intrinsic task values as factors influencing classroom music curriculum choice. This was evident with Anthony who described the non-elective classroom music curriculum as "an awful lot of fun" and who had "loved music with Mr Mac", yet chose Art and World History based on his domain specific academic self-concepts.

ANTHONY: I love History. My brothers were brilliant at History. It's just in the family. I'm loving it at the moment. It's just a lot of fun. ... I'm more an actor than a musician, I'm not a singer.

INTERVIEWER: But you enjoy both?

ANTHONY: Yeah, people can't get me to shut up when I'm singing. I'm not so good but I like to sing. ... Mum helped me, she didn't push me, she just said, "Yeah, Art's a lovely thing to do and so is music. Just go with something you'd enjoy, because it's important that you enjoy Year Nine and Ten", and I said, "Well, yeah, obviously I'd enjoy World History with my best friends 'cause we'd have a lot of fun", and I chose Art because, I don't know, I'm not so good at deciphering music and stuff like that on paper, so I prefer Art.

The significance of social comparison as a determinant in self-perceptions of ability appeared to have been enhanced through a school culture that rewarded high levels of achievement according to external indicators and the publication of student achievement relative to all other students in the cohort. In addition to student levels of achievement and effort gradings, all curriculum areas reported a student's rank within the cohort.

RAY'S FATHER: The person who did very well got a, you know, almost a centrefold spread and great attention and much praise and everything, and this person got half a Mitchell less but because they didn't capture the prize, no recognition, not even a mention, half a Mitchell! ... That's the other thing about the School I find incredible, the kids don't look at their mark, they look at their place.

4.3.3 Students with limited or no previous instrumental or vocal music tuition who had elected not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Consistent with the interaction between music self-concept and intrinsic task values identified by the parents of the elective music students, students with low domain specific self-concepts reported limited intrinsic task values for the respective academic domains. Perceived competence was found to be a primary determinant of intrinsic motivation and subsequent interest in the respective curriculum area, suggesting that a sense of mastery or efficacy brought about a sense of enjoyment.

RAY'S MOTHER: Ray participated really well and did really well, so suddenly History became a real possibility, whereas before he started Year Eight, in Year Seven he didn't like History.

. . .

ALLISON: If I don't really understand something I don't like it.

The relationship between domain specific self-concept and intrinsic task values was highlighted when a change in a student's perception of competence brought about a change in intrinsic interest in the curriculum area.

INTERVIEWER: What is your favourite subject?

ELIZABETH: I remember it used to be Maths but that was when I was little, but now I can't believe I liked it.

INTERVIEWER: Because it had changed or you've changed?

ELIZABETH: I've gone into a higher class and I am probably not coping as well.

. . .

SOPHIE: I liked it [Latin] in Year Seven it was a lot easier in Year Seven then you go to Year Eight and it got really difficult. ... I didn't like Science last year because I didn't understand. ... It's better this year because I understand it.

With intrinsic motivation being determined, in part, by a perception of competence, negative perceptions of musical ability could be viewed as negative influences on a student's motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum.

INTERVIEWER: How do you think you were as a music student?

ELIZABETH: Not very good, I'm pretty hopeless.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: She hasn't said anything about the course in Year Eight?

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER: Well probably a general comment, "I suck at music", or something like that.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: How would you rate yourself as a music student in the classroom? Do you think you did ok?

BEN: A bit below average.

Figure 4.5 illustrates the nature of the relationship between domain specific academic self-concept and student intrinsic task values. A positive music self-concept promoted a sense of enjoyment through feelings of mastery, while negative perceptions of competence diminished intrinsic task values.

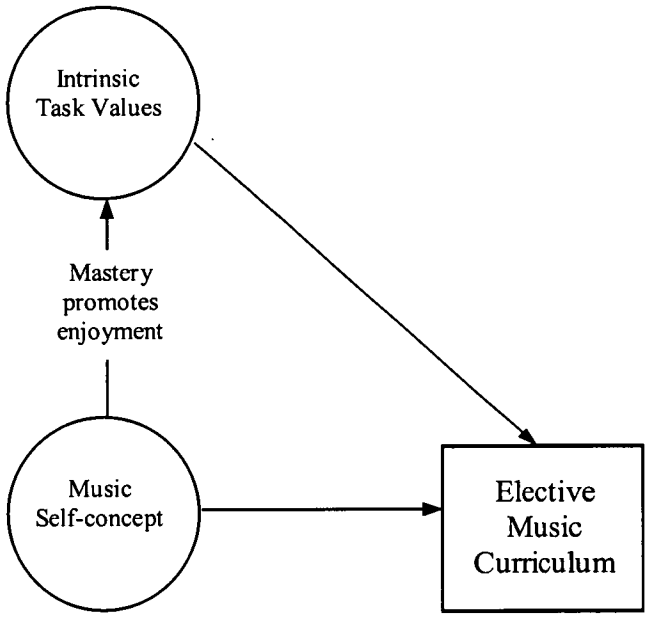

Figure 4.5: Intrinsic task values mediated by music self-concept

Allison's perceptions of competence in music proved more influential in her elective curriculum choice than positive intrinsic task values and peer group influences.

> ALLISON: I like music but I don't think I would do very well.
>
> . . .
>
> ALLISON'S MOTHER: I know that she's enjoyed music. She's really enjoyed music because she loves music. But she said she could see that she doesn't have the sort of skills that you need to have. ... She said, "Oh Mum they [friends] are going to do those sorts of things but I'm not because I'm not good at that.

Student perceptions of competence were either enhanced or diminished through evaluative feedback. In Allison's case, evaluative feedback was offered by her mother when recommending she not participate in the elective music curriculum based on perceptions of limited musical competence.

> ALLISON'S MOTHER: It [classroom music] is perceived as fairly difficult. I would not have said to Allison to do elective music in Nine and Ten because I don't think she would have coped with it. You know, it's a pretty demanding sort of subject to do well at. She can sing and all those sorts of things and she can play the piano a bit but you have to have more than that to be doing it as an elective. I think I told her that music was a bit more skilled. A bit more skilled than she was, and I think that's probably the other thing, kids would perceive music as being really for the really good musicians and not for me.

Evaluative feedback offered by teachers promoting perceptions of competence served to enhance student motivation to participate in the respective curriculum areas.

> ELIZABETH: I think they just chose it on what they thought they were good at. I know one friend was told ... by both her teachers, for French and Art, that she was very good at them and that they were hoping she would do them as an elective, so they were the two subjects that were chosen.

Elizabeth's reference to the influence of teacher evaluative feedback on her friend's decision to participate in an elective curriculum area, reinforced the effects of positive competence feedback on intrinsic motivation outlined by Harackiewicz and Sansone (2000, p86), where individuals use this information to assess personal levels of competence, a process that may lead to enhanced interest in the activity (see Figure 4.6).

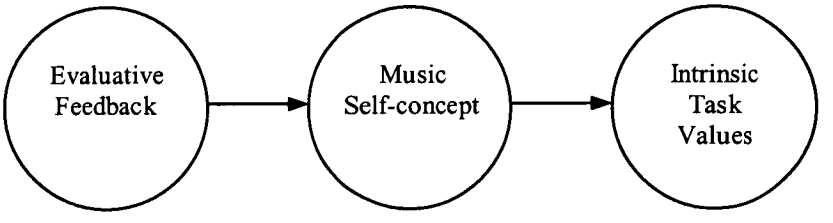

Figure 4.6: Effects of competence feedback on music self-concept as a factor influencing intrinsic task values

In addition to the effect of evaluative feedback, previous instrumental music experiences were reported to be fundamental in the formation of a student's music self-concept. For students not participating in instrumental music tuition, perceptions

of competence in music were based on instrumental music experiences within the primary school classroom music curriculum.

> ALLISON: I liked it but I was in the band for it and I just couldn't learn everything as quickly as everyone else, they were going too fast I think.

. . .

> ALEX: I'm not very good at it [music] either because I can't really read music or anything and I'm not good at that sort of thing, but I still enjoy it a bit. ... I think you have to have, like, a knowledge of some instrument and how to play it to be able to read and get better at music.

With low music self-concepts being described according to student perceptions of competence in reading musical notation, developed through instrumental music tuition, perceptions of ability in the non-elective classroom music curriculum appeared to be insignificant as a factor influencing participation in the elective classroom music curriculum.

> SOPHIE: Yeah, I understood everything in Year Eight. I understood, I just didn't really like doing it. If I played like a musical instrument or something like that and I find music interesting then I would probably enjoy it more, but I didn't so.

. . .

> ALEX: Music, it hasn't been bad. I'd probably say I'm not very good at it either because I can't really read music or anything and I'm not good at that sort of music. But I still enjoy it a bit and the bit that, topics I'm enjoying like rock, the sort of thing that I like the different types of rock and maybe the film music and stuff like that not just that the usual notes and everything like that, the tempo and stuff like that.

4.3.4 Summary of findings related to self-concept and self-efficacy

The influence of music self-concept as a factor in elective classroom music curriculum choice was evident with a high congruence between positive self-perceptions of musical ability and those students electing to participate in the classroom music curriculum. Students with high music self-concepts possessed confidence in personal musical abilities to perform tasks in the elective music curriculum demonstrating a positive self-efficacy for classroom music. Parents also promoted music self-concept as a factor in elective curriculum choice by advocating music as a desirable curriculum choice based on positive perceptions of their child's ability in music and, hence, possession of the skills necessary to achieve in the elective classroom music curriculum.

Despite relatively high student participation rates in non-classroom music activities and a large proportion of students reporting positive intrinsic task values for instrumental and vocal music, student enrolment behaviour was influenced by self-perceptions of competence specific to the elective classroom music curriculum. The influence of student music self-efficacy was evident with a small group of students who reported a lack of confidence in personal musical ability to meet the perceived challenges of the elective classroom music curriculum.

Student music self-efficacy was based on perceptions of both the degree of difficulty in the elective classroom music curriculum and personal musical abilities in meeting the challenges of the elective classroom music curriculum. Students described personal musical ability in relation to a small group of students perceived to have very high levels of musical ability and be likely to elect to participate in the classroom

music curriculum. With students of perceived high levels of musical ability acting as a frame of reference for the assessment of one's own musical ability, a number of proficient instrumental music students reported unfavourable comparisons, leading to a diminished music self-concept. Student awareness of social comparisons as a determinant in self-perceptions of ability was heightened with a school academic culture that reported student levels of achievement relative to the achievement levels of all other students within the same year level.

Fundamental to student comparisons of ability in music were perceptions of competence in music performance and the reading of musical notation. Perceptions of ability in the non-elective classroom music curriculum did not feature in student comparisons of musical ability and appeared to be insignificant as a factor influencing participation in the elective music curriculum.

The effects of evaluative feedback offered by teachers and parents also featured in student perceptions of competence. While students receiving positive competence feedback developed enhanced intrinsic task values and perceptions of competence, the effects of negative competence feedback produced a reluctance to tackle challenging tasks that, in turn, produced a low self-efficacy.

Consistent with expectancy-value models (Wigfield & Eccles, 2001) of motivation, students identified expectancy components related to perceptions of ability to be a primary determinant of intrinsic motivation. The link between these two constructs suggested domain specific academic self-concept to be a significant mediating influence on the development of intrinsic task values, with a sense of mastery or

efficacy bringing about a sense of enjoyment. The link between these constructs was highlighted when changes in student self-perceptions of competence produced corresponding changes in student intrinsic task values.

Figure 4.7 summarises the nature of the complex interactions between individual and contextual factors in the development of student music self-concept as a factor influencing student elective music curriculum choice. A feature of student self-perceptions of music ability was a social frame of reference where self-perceptions of music ability were compared with a small group of students identified as achieving at high levels in performance music. In addition, positive competence feedback offered by parents and teachers was found to enhance music self-concept. Conversely, negative competence feedback diminished student music self-concept. While domain specific academic self-concept was a factor in elective curriculum choice generally, student perceptions of the elective classroom music curriculum as challenging heightened the influence of self-efficacy as a factor in student classroom music enrolment behaviour.

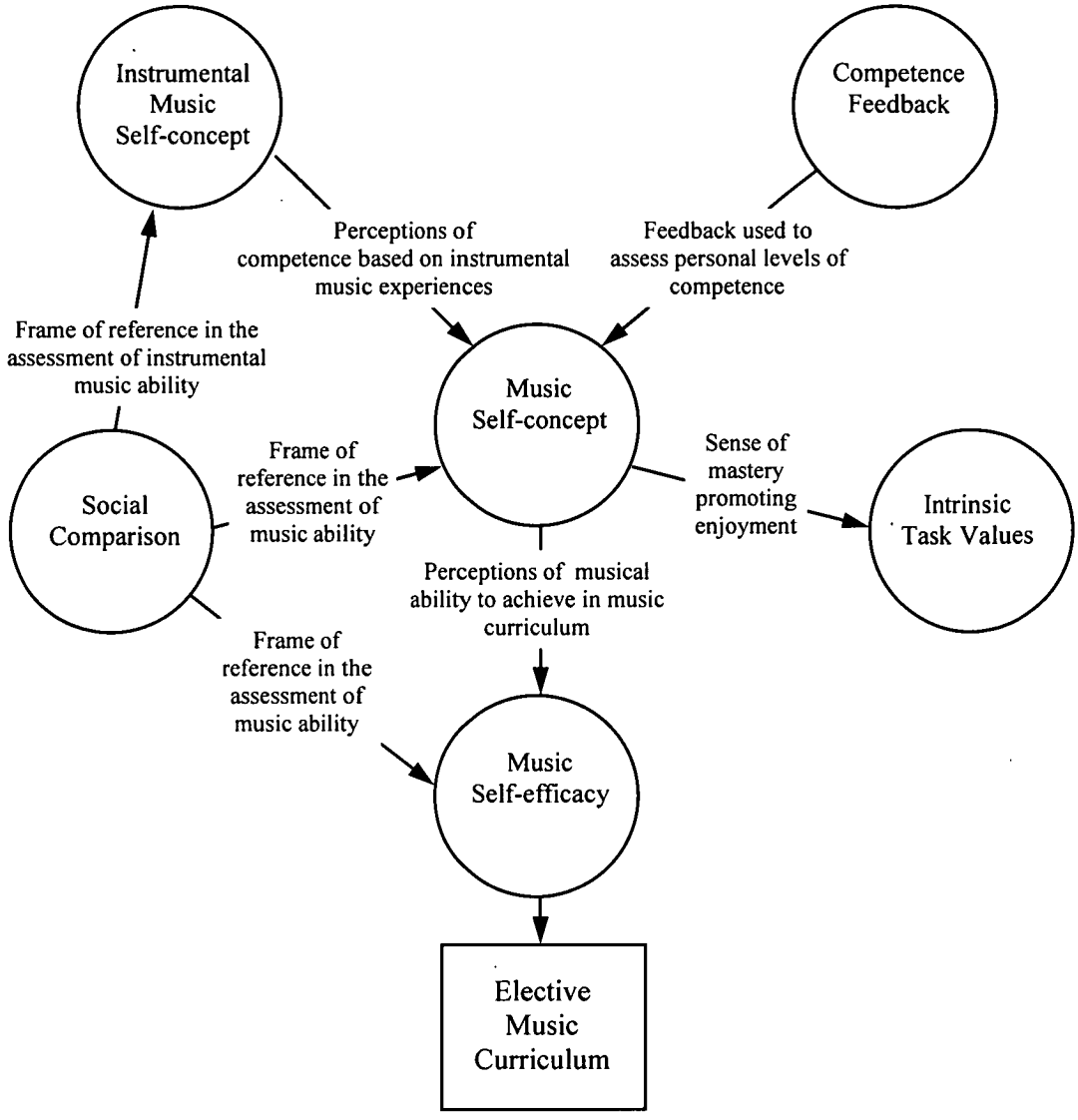

Figure 4.7: Interactions between individual and contextual factors in the development of a student's music self-concept as a factor influencing student elective music curriculum choice

4.4 Attribution theory

Positive perceptions of ability featured in 45% of student responses to question two of the survey as a causal attribute for academic success (Appendix G). Table 4.2 summarises student responses to question two of the survey and provides an overview of student perceptions of attribution to academic success relative to achievement levels in the other curriculum areas of Year Eight.

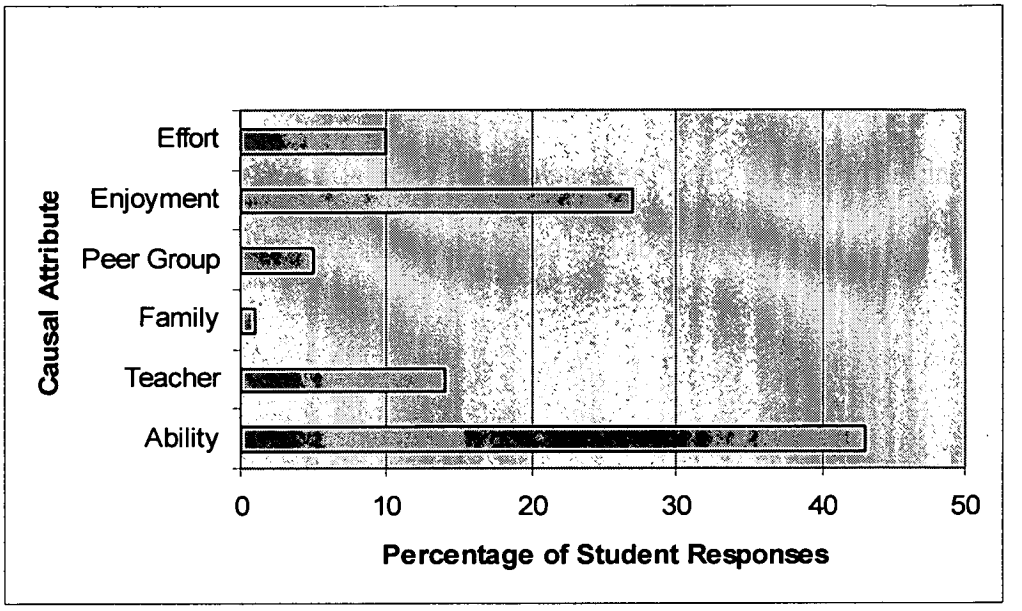

Table 4.2: Student attribution for academic success

The high proportion of students who identified ability as a causal attribute for academic success reinforced the role of domain specific academic self-concept as a factor in elective curriculum choice. Students with an ability attribution orientation are less likely to anticipate changes in outcomes in future related tasks (Weiner, 1974). Student performance expectations in classroom music, therefore, are likely to reflect perceptions of competence based on past performance.

Of the students who attributed academic success to ability, 40% linked personal perceptions of competence with intrinsic task values. The nature of the interaction between the two constructs is reflected across the Year Eight cohort in student response to question two of the survey included in Table 4.3 below.

Survey Question Two: ***What school subjects do you think you are good at?*** ***Why do you think you are better at these subjects compared to the other subjects you study?***
I enjoy them and feel comfortable because I can do them well.
I like them and I seem to have a "knack" for them.
Because I relate to them easily. Things you like and relate to are fun and you learn more.
I am better at subjects I enjoy because I remember things I have fun learning more easily.
Because I like these subjects and good marks come easier from these than others.
I find them more interesting than other subjects and they are easier to understand.
Because I understand them easily and I enjoy them more than other subjects.
I am able to understand them and they often have fun things to do.
I like them more than others and they seem easier to as well. Probably because I enjoy these subjects or find them easy.
I enjoy them and there just easier to understand.
Because I am more interested in them compared to others and I get better results in them.
I enjoy them more, like the teachers, understand them.
I enjoy them, I am good at writing. I am pretty artistic and I am just interested in those subjects.
I have had past experiences with most of the subjects which helped me understand the harder concepts. I was interested more in these subjects and wanted to learn more.
Because they seem easier than other subjects and easier to learn. They are also very fun.
Because they are most fun and interesting and because I am naturally good at these subjects.

Table 4.3: Student responses linking perceptions of competence with intrinsic task values

The identification of intrinsic task values as a causal attribute for success, illustrated in Table 4.3, highlights the link between intrinsic task values and perceptions of competence consistent with cognitive evaluation theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980). In this

theory, positive perceptions of autonomy with respect to achievement outcomes, established through the stable internal ability attribute, promote positive expectancies for success in future tasks that enhance intrinsic motivation.

Closely linked to student perceptions of causal attribution are student goal orientations. Students with a task goal orientation identify the purpose of achieving to be personal improvement and understanding of the learning task (Meece & Holt, 1993) where effort is perceived to be a causal attribute for success. Students with an ability goal orientation focus on appearing competent relative to others and define success accordingly. Success for students with an ability goal orientation is perceived to reflect ability and not effort (Urdan & Maehr, 1995).

The richness of the interview data, discussed below, facilitates a deeper understanding of the complex network of factors that contribute to student attributions as applied to student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum.

4.4.1 Students who had elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Students electing to study classroom music had reported high self-perceptions of musical ability and had experienced success in the non-elective classroom music curriculum, relative to the performance of their peers. These students attributed much of their success to personal ability levels in music.

ANNIE: I think you need a certain amount of natural talent.

The role of effort, however, was also clearly acknowledged.

INTERVIEW: What do you think it takes to be good at music?

MITCHELL: A good ear for music, being able to listen to something and being able to play it back or just hum it back and remember it, so, yeah, just a good ear for music and to be able to understand, like get the whole idea of, you know, how....your understanding of notes on the stave and the way octaves work and stuff like that, just the theory of it.

INTERVIEW: Part of that is your natural.....what you're born with stuff?

MITCHELL: That helps a lot. My sister can't sing a song in tune and so.....

INTERVIEW: But if you aren't born with much can you compensate?

MITCHELL: Oh yeah, but if you're up against someone who's very naturally musical then it's going to be a lot harder for you if you're not naturally musical and you're up against someone who can play something straight away. It's obviously going to be harder but at that stage you could still be excellent at it.

Success in the non-elective classroom music curriculum had been attributed to previous non-classroom music experiences in instrumental or vocal music tuition and musicianship.

PAUL: I found that it was more like a Musicianship class which I'd already done 'cause I'd done Second Grade last year and also, because I'd been learning the piano and euphonium up 'til then I had a basic.....I knew most of the stuff already so it was....I found it fairly easy.

. . .

ANNIE: I remember thinking on the exam, "Oh this is easy for me", because it was like, what is a minim worth, semibreve and everything, whereas people, semibreve, they're like, "What's a semibreve?"

Previous tuition in instrumental music and the theory of music was perceived to be essential if students were to be successful in the non-elective classroom music curriculum.

> ANNIE: I did think, for some people, that the writing music for films was very hard as they had no idea about anything and how to write it, how to play an instrument, how to put a beat to it. I thought that was very hard for them.
>
> . . .
>
> PAUL: Some of the people, like, they'd never played an instrument before and he just gave us this sheet of piano music for one hand and it would be, like, the *Addams Family* and the *Happy Days* theme and all that sort of stuff and he'd Mitchell us on how we could play it. So I think that was a bit unfair on other people. ... He marked us on how we played them. We had three lessons in the keyboard room, like on the keys and in the fourth one we'd have to play it for him up the front with everyone else listening.
>
> INTERVIEW: So that's pretty scary in Year Seven and Eight too, isn't it?
>
> PAUL: I found it scary even though I'd been, like, I'd kind of played.

The interaction of Paul's parents' values and support for Paul's personal musical goals was reported to have been a strong influence on the attitudes and goals he adopted.

> INTERVIEWER: Okay, what do you think it takes to be good at music? Effort, luck, hard work, some kind of in-born ability when you're born, or the right environment? What do you think?
>
> PAUL: It probably needs support from family and them like, pushing you a bit. I reckon goals to set, that's why I do exams so I don't, like, lose track and just sort of drift.

Despite a high level of musical achievement in both the non-elective classroom music curriculum and external A.M.E.B. examinations, passing with credit in her sixth grade trombone performance examination, Jenny described how it was necessary to apply effort in classroom music tasks if she, and other students, were to perform at a level of achievement reflective of personal levels of ability.

> JENNY: I think that's what makes a difference, you've just got to go over, otherwise you've got to go, it's just going to slip your brain and you're not going to know it. Like you learn something and then you forget it after a while, but if you keep running over it, reading over it and stuff you're actually going to remember it in an exam really well. I think that's what a lot of people don't do in our music class they just, when we learn it they are half there and then they don't have the full attention there and that makes a difference and then they don't go over it say every two weeks or something, like for ten minutes or so. When they don't do that then you won't have any idea whatsoever in the exam.

Jenny's perception of the role of effort in achieving success in the classroom music curriculum was based on her own experiences of the non-elective classroom music curriculum. Having been mildly disappointed with her examination result in the first semester, placing ninth in classroom music for the full Year Eight cohort of eighty-two, Jenny consciously applied more effort to the non-elective classroom music curriculum in an attempt to improve on her first semester result. She endeavoured to heighten her understanding of the curriculum content and described how she would revise class work at regular intervals, usually every two weeks. The result of this increased effort in semester two resulted in Jenny placing first in the full Year Eight cohort.

> JENNY: I got it right this time though because like you know how we did the rock stuff in the first half of the year, listening to it and writing it down and I hadn't learnt it well enough. Except this time, I made sure I learnt it really well. Like, because, I knew it was going to be like that again and I thought I've got to get past that.
>
> INTERVIEWER: So you're good at music, but that almost suggests that you need to, like do you think it is more important that you've got ability or make a big effort to do well in music?
>
> JENNY: Both. I don't know if I've got ability or not, I hope I do, because like I'm right into music but effort is really important. Like if you're naturally smart, you can just soak in information and you're not going to come top.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Yeah, but you'll do well.

> JENNY: You will do well, but you're not going to come top and I think that's what makes the difference.

The effort attribute described by Jenny for success in the classroom music curriculum is framed within a positive perception of ability as she had achieved at a relatively high level prior to the increased application of effort. In other curriculum areas, however, where she had lower perceptions of ability, Jenny's parents described her as having an ability attribute orientation.

> JENNY'S MOTHER: When she doesn't think she understands something she doesn't do it. She had to learn that wasn't the right way of behaving.

In addition to positive perceptions of ability, Annie suggests that students need to possess positive intrinsic task values if a level of effort is to be applied that may enhance student success.

> ANNIE: I just hate languages, you try really hard but you sort of lose that concentration, whereas if you enjoy it as well as good at it then you find, "Oh this is good". ... I mean it's like somebody absolutely hating animals and becoming a Vet, it's a little bit hard to do.

4.4.2 Students participating in instrumental or vocal music tuition who had not elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Students participating in the instrumental or vocal music tuition program acknowledged ability in music as a causal attribute for achievement in the classroom music curriculum, with four of the five interviewed students indicating the level of achievement being mediated by the level of effort applied by students.

Scott had communicated to his mother that he perceived ability to be the primary causal attribute for achievement in the classroom music curriculum with student results unlikely to change regardless of the amount of effort applied by the student during the course of study.

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: Like English, it's in you. He said, as he went off to his music exam, "Well you either understand what the music is saying or you don't". It's like a comprehension, you either understand what's written there or you don't, there's no learning to do.

Scott's perception that achievement in the classroom music curriculum is determined according to the individual's musical ability level alone was unique. Parents of students participating in the instrumental or vocal tuition program frequently referred to the role of effort as a significant contributing causal attribute for success in music.

> RAY'S MOTHER: He did the grade four exam and he hadn't been practicing. Derek [instrumental music teacher] said, "I don't know if he can do it". He didn't study for his exams. For two weeks he went over to the studio every night. He'd put a tape on with the music Derek had given him and in two weeks of work, so that's the sort of talent he has got. ... Ray is really bright but in fact what he has seen is you just have to work. You just have to actually put in a little, not even a lot of effort, like two weeks to get your grade four trombone exam.

While Anthony perceived ability to be a significant causal attribute for success in the elective classroom music curriculum, he also acknowledged the role of effort, suggesting that students could be successful without high levels of musical ability if they had a strong intrinsic interest. This high intrinsic interest would provide the motivation to apply the effort required to achieve at high levels.

> INTERVIEWER: To be good at music is it a gift or hard work?
>
> ANTHONY: Yes, I think it's both. You've got to have a gift to start off with, but you've also got to love music. I don't love music as much as all the other

> people do. I didn't really have the gift so, and it's a bit of a combination and it's a lot of hard work, obviously.

The recognition of effort as a causal attribute for success, enabled students to assume some control in personal achievement levels when participating in the classroom music curriculum. Individual students could enhance personal achievement levels through greater application of effort. Despite the opportunity to enhance achievement levels, the application of effort was dependent on personal task values and not potential achievement levels.

> TOM: A lot of people muck up in music because they don't think they're going to be musicians so they just do whatever they want.

The mediating influence of task values on students' application of effort resulted in a small group of students applying themselves to the classroom music curriculum learning tasks, having identified music as satisfying personal intrinsic task values or utility goals related to career aspirations or desirable life skills.

> INTERVIEWER: What makes for a good music student? Is it something you are born with or is it something you can learn?
>
> RAY: Something you can learn. You just pick up the instrument then you enjoy it and you go well, as long as you enjoy it.
>
> INTERVIEWER: So in your music class in Years Seven and Eight, would you say everybody could have done okay if they wanted to?
>
> RAY: Yeah, apart from the ones who had already resigned in Year Seven and Eight, they're the ones that didn't give a stuff.
>
> INTERVIEWER: They just closed their minds.
>
> RAY: Yeah
>
> INTERVIEWER: If they changed their minds they could have done it?

RAY: Yeah, if they changed their minds, but once they've closed their mind to everything they see music is just bad so you can't say anything to them about music.

4.4.3 Students with limited or no previous instrumental or vocal music tuition who had elected not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Instrumental music experience was frequently nominated as the major attribute for success in the classroom music curriculum from students with little or no instrumental music background.

ALLISON: I think you have to be playing [an instrument] or doing something to learn music. .. You've got to really want to do it and people that play it can learn a lot easier than people who don't play an instrument, because they know all the notes and pitch and everything like that.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: What do you reckon makes for a good music student? Is it something that you're born with or can you develop it?

ALEX: I think you can probably develop it but I think you have to have lessons.

INTERVIEWER: On an instrument?

ALEX: On an instrument, maybe musicianship would be good but I think you have to have like knowledge of some instrument and how to play it. To be able to read and get better at music.

INTERVIEWER: And that would make it a bit more?

ALEX: Easier a bit more accessible.

INTERVIEWER: You'd feel a bit more confident and understand.

ALEX: Yeah not so bad you don't feel like you don't know anything about it. You don't feel like you're so bad or whatever.

For those students who had not had any significant instrumental music experience, the elective music course was perceived to be very difficult. Allison's mother described students with sufficient levels of music literacy as those who commenced instrumental music tuition at a young age.

> ALLISON'S MOTHER: I think music is really important to be taught from Kindergarten. Because if you teach kids to read music when they are learning to read then they can read music like you wouldn't believe by the time they got to High School. ... Good music kids would have and even most of the other kids would have and it wouldn't be such a chore. If you start children learning instruments and then do musicianship a bit later they start struggling with the concept of reading music. ... That kind of thing eludes as being a very difficult task for a lot of people, whereas if it was taught when you were younger ...

Students also identified the level of instrumental music experience as a significant attribute for success in the non-elective music program. The level of performance on a musical instrument reflected the level of success students anticipated in the classroom music curriculum.

> INTERVIEWER: What do you think allows someone to be good at music?
>
> SOPHIE: I think if they've been playing since like year three. ... I think sometimes it'd have to be something you're born with. You understand it, you like doing it, it's a passion.

Sophie's suggestion that students need to have a "passion" for music if they are to be successful in the classroom music curriculum reinforced the perception that students needed very high levels of intrinsically orientated task values to apply the effort required to be successful in the learning tasks. With the level of student effort being closely related to intrinsic task values, the perception that music did not satisfy strong intrinsic task values with a large proportion of the student cohort served to limit

achievement in the classroom music curriculum, regardless of student attribution for success.

> SOPHIE: You've got to be interested in the first place otherwise you don't want to be there, you don't want to do anything.

4.4.4 Summary of findings related to student attribution

Students identified previous non-classroom music experiences in instrumental or vocal music tuition and musicianship as indicators of musical ability and suggested that these experiences were significant causal attributes for achievement in the classroom music curriculum.

Student perceptions of effort as a causal attribute for success in the classroom music curriculum were framed within perceptions of ability. Students with positive perceptions of musical ability perceived the level of achievement to be mediated by the application of effort, while students with low perceptions of ability suggested that the application of effort was insignificant in determining levels of achievement.

In addition to student perceptions of ability, the application of effort was reported to be dependent on student intrinsic task values for music. Students who held positive intrinsic task values were more motivated to apply the effort required to achieve at higher levels. With the level of student effort being closely related to intrinsic task values, the perception that the classroom music curriculum did not satisfy strong intrinsic task values with a large proportion of the student cohort served to limit achievement in the classroom music curriculum, regardless of student attribution for success.

The mediating influence of task values and perceptions of musical ability in the application of effort as a causal attribute for success is illustrated in Figure 4.8. Students with perceptions of limited musical ability held strong ability attribute orientations, while students with positive perceptions of musical ability or who held positive intrinsic task values for music, identified effort as a contributing attribute for achievement in the classroom music curriculum.

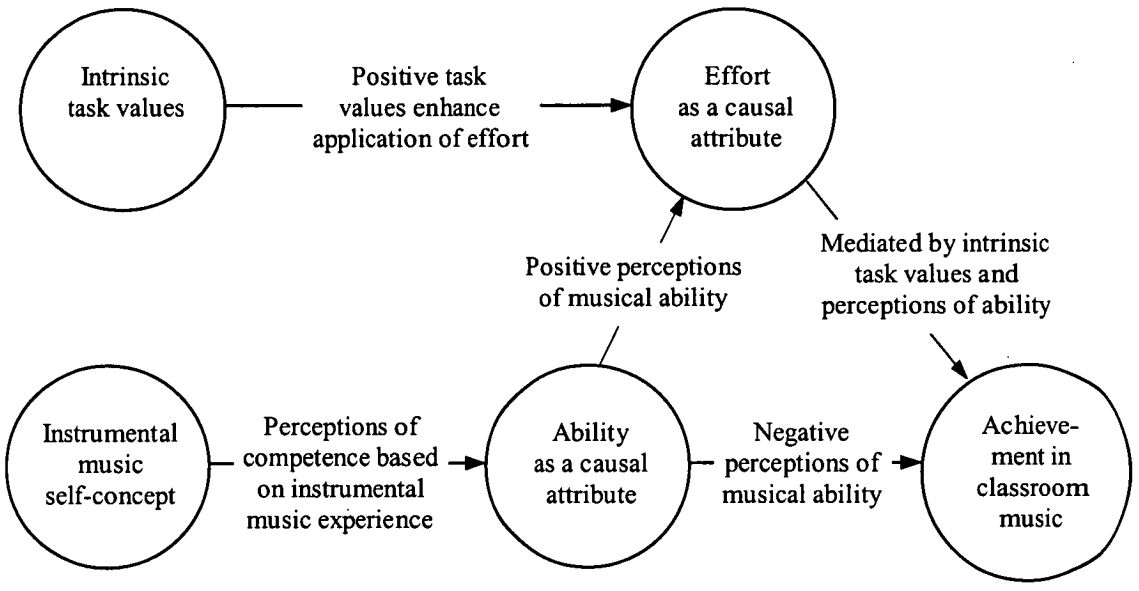

Figure 4.8: Student attribution for achievement in the classroom music curriculum

4.5 Chapter summary

The analysis of data in this chapter has focused on the motivational factors of task values, music self-concept and self-efficacy, and attribution theory as they represent three primary cognitive mediators employed by students in perceiving, interpreting and acting upon the situation (Cole & Chan, 1990). While the discussion explored each of the motivational factors as discrete dimensions, the data revealed student motivation to be determined by a range of interrelated factors.

Student motivation to participate in the elective music curriculum was characterised by an interaction between student task values and perceptions of personal efficacy. Where the classroom music curriculum was perceived to satisfy very high intrinsic task values or multiple goals, and students had high outcome expectancies based on personal evaluations of their capabilities to perform tasks in the music curriculum, motivation to participate in the music curriculum was enhanced.

The complex nature of the interactions between the motivational factors of task values, self-perceptions of efficacy and competence, and outcome attributions was highlighted when exploring the antecedents of student expectancy. Efficacy beliefs were based on perceptions of task difficulty related to the elective classroom music curriculum and personal competence evaluations in meeting the challenges of the elective classroom music curriculum. Competence beliefs were derived from social comparisons of instrumental musical ability with student attributions for success or failure in classroom music influencing expectancies for future task attainments. Perceptions of competence were also found to contribute to the development of positive intrinsic task values through a student's sense of mastery or efficacy bringing about a sense of enjoyment.

While a study of the key motivational factors is essential in gaining an understanding of student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum, a student's motivational orientation does not exist independently of the external constraints students encounter within specific school and family environments. Rather, motivation is embedded within a range of contextual factors that contribute to a complex dynamic that influences student motivation for task participation.

To obtain a more complete understanding of the motivational influences evident in student elective curriculum choice in this study, Chapter Five expands the discussion of factors influencing student motivation to include the environmental influences of school culture, peer group influences, student perceptions of teachers, and family values.

Chapter Five

Analysis and Discussion: Contextual Factors

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter Four, data related to the key motivational theories of task values, music self-concept and self-efficacy, and attribution theory were examined as factors influencing student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a critical analysis and discussion of the key contextual factors of school culture, peer group influences, family values, and student perceptions of teachers as evident in the setting where this research project was conducted. Each contextual factor can influence student enrolment behaviour through the promotion of particular cultural values and beliefs. A student's motivational orientation, therefore, may be influenced by the rewards or consequences communicated to them during the decision making process. These contextual interventions may provide extrinsic constraints that have consequences on student motivation to participate in preferred tasks (Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 1999).

The shaded area of Figure 5.1 illustrates the focus of the current chapter with the key contextual factors of school culture, peer group influences, family values, and student perceptions of teachers analysed and discussed according to the following sequence:

5.2 School culture

5.3 Peer group influences

5.4 Family values

5.5 Student perceptions of teachers

Within each contextual element, the analysis and discussed is organised into three groups corresponding with the purposive interview samples. Namely:

1 Students who had elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

2 Students participating in instrumental or vocal music tuition who had not elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

3 Students with limited or no previous instrumental or vocal music tuition who had elected not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

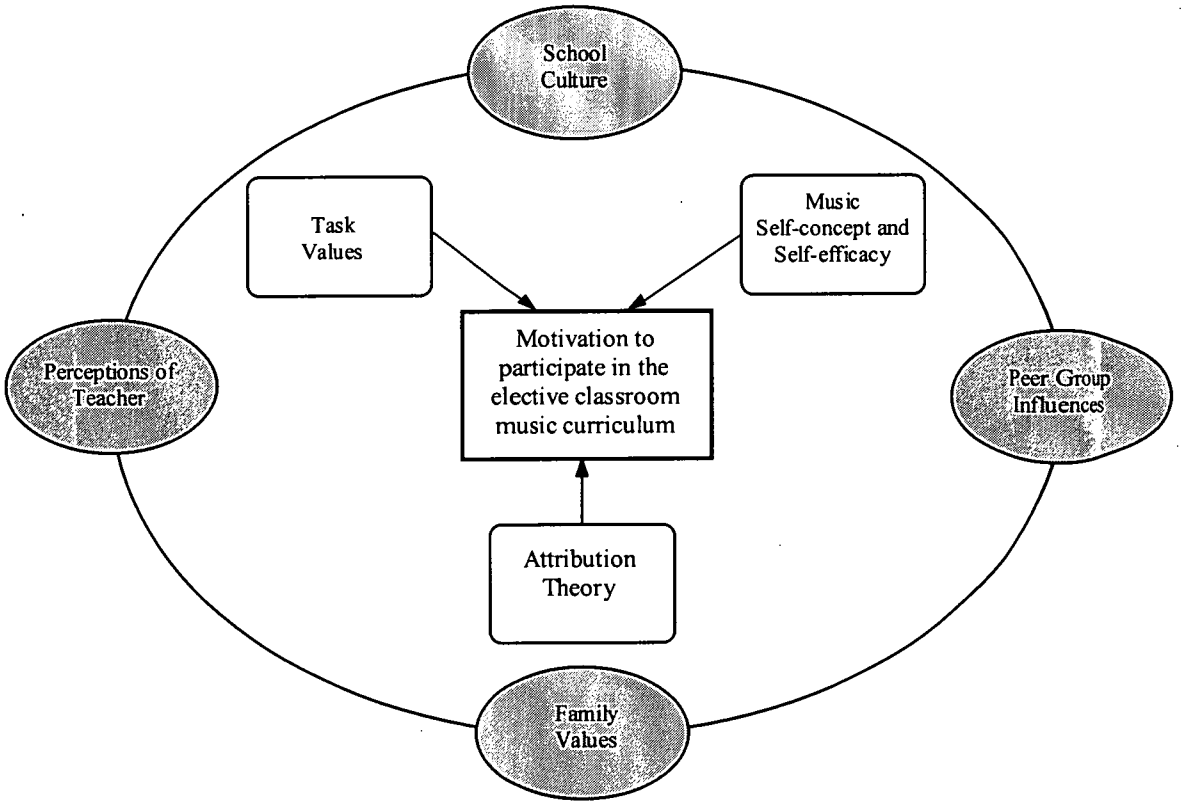

Figure 5.1: Contextual factors analysed and discussed in Chapter Five

5.2 School culture

The broader school culture is a significant environmental influence on the development and expression of student motivation (Dweck & Leggett, 1988), framing the complex multiple social interactions of the classroom climate, teacher practices, family values, and peer group influences.

The school's reward structure served to institute the goals and values of the over-riding school culture. This was evident in the nature of awards presented at assemblies, published student achievements and school structure.

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: You see lots of sport in the newsletter because there is always the little, you know, post-mortems of the game and the fixtures for next week... How can you get your half blues or blues in sport when you can't get in music or academics? What's the deal? It's absurd.

. . .

> RAY: We even do a cadet camp in Year Seven like a bivouac cadet camp and all that. You don't do any music camps so they're trying to keep you in cadets and try to get you to do cadets.

The school structure includes a compulsory cadet unit for all male and female students in Years Eight to Ten and a compulsory co-curricular sport program for all students. The range of available winter sporting activities is limited to netball and hockey for girls and rugby and cross-country running for boys. Students in Years Eleven and Twelve are able to participate in the additional sporting activities of aerobics for girls and soccer for boys. Where students participated in at least three co-curricular music ensembles, students could be granted exemption from the compulsory co-curricular sport program. Students could also receive exemption if travel arrangements to and from school prohibited attendance at after school training

sessions. Students unable to participate in weekend sporting fixtures due to part-time employment were also eligible for exemption. Table 5.1 and Table 5.2 outline student participation rates for girls and boys in the respective sporting activities during the winter season at the time of this study.

Year level	Full cohort enrolment	Girls in cohort	Netball	Hockey	Aerobics	Girls exempt from sport
Year 7	111	57	36	21		0
Year 8	83	44	23	20		1
Year 9	97	51	22	24		5
Year 10	112	49	24	21		4
Year11	117	59	22	24	7	6
Year 12	124	70	31	14	15	10
Total	644	330	158	124	22	26

Table 5.1: Student participation rates in the compulsory co-curricular sporting program for girls in the 2001 winter season (School Year Book, 2001)

Year level	Full cohort enrolment	Boys in cohort	Rugby	Cross-country running	Soccer	Boys exempt from sport
Year 7	111	54	47	5		2
Year 8	83	39	28	6		5
Year 9	97	46	33	6		7
Year 10	112	63	46	7		10
Year11	117	58	21	6	15	16
Year 12	124	54	23	2	9	20
Total	644	314	198	32	24	60

Table 5.2: Student participation rates in the compulsory co-curricular sporting program for boys in the 2001 winter season (School Year Book, 2001)

The limited, yet compulsory, sporting activities available to both girls and boys represents socialised expectations of gender appropriate activities. In particular, the very high participation rates of boys in rugby (62%), illustrates a strong cultural bias

within the school consistent with broader social expectations and gender stereotyping (Green, 1997). A perception by students of the existence of different gender social roles can readily influence social behaviour (Snodgrass, 1992) with students less likely to participate in activities perceived to be incongruent with prescriptions (Cramer, Million & Perreault, 2002). The gendered nature of sporting activities and high cultural value placed on boys' sport contributed to the construction of social expectations consistent with student perceptions of a hierarchy within sport. These social expectations were reflected in many student and parent responses during interview conversations.

> INTERVIEWER: What do you think the school stresses as important?
>
> ANNIE: I think it is sport, football. It is a kind of a controversy because it is compulsory for males to do football, they can't do soccer. ... It is so competitive, like with the debating team, the debating team went up and won everything and we came back and nobody cared. It was just the Firsts won football on the weekend. ... Same with music, musicianship awards don't really matter. Same with art works and reading prizes. I think it is very over balanced ... you can sort of see what is low on their priorities it is not as if they try to hide them.
>
> . . .
>
> SOPHIE: Rugby, rugby's big. ... There's always someone saying come watch the first rugby, come watch the first hockey. There's not much of that for netball and soccer.
>
> . . .
>
> ALLISON: Definitely sport, especially rugby and hockey, they are the biggest ones.
>
> . . .
>
> RAY: Well sport is the top thing, because sport takes priority over everything, like rugby and all that.

. . .

PAUL'S FATHER: Rugby's part of the School's tradition and it's a conservative country school, so how they'd cope with, if you had an extremely brilliant academic or an extremely brilliant musician, artistic person who was a little bit hard to handle or whatever, I don't they'd be comfortable with that.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: Is sport important to the school?

ANGUS: Oh yeah, yeah, really important I think to the Headmaster, especially rugby, like I play soccer and that was, they prefer rugby. I think sport is really important to the school.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: Are there any activities that you see in the school that seem to come through as promoted more than other activities?

BEN'S MOTHER: Rugby, definitely, over any other sport in the school. Rugby has a higher prestige and more money thrown at it definitely.

One consequence of the strong sporting culture within the school appeared to be a limited value placed on music related activities.

JENNY: From the school's point of view it [music] is not a very high priority and they [peer group] would want to be in the good books with them [school].

. . .

ANNIE'S FATHER: Rugby, it frustrates the hell out of us that rugby is just paramount in the school before music and other sports.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: The school has a wide range of activities for students. What do you think they emphasise here?

SOPHIE: Well I think sport's sort of probably a lot bigger than music would be.

INTERVIEWER: And academics, where does that fit?

SOPHIE: It's probably up there with sport as well. Yeah but music is sort of, I think it's because not many people do music. It doesn't seem to have so many people doing music so it's not paid as much attention. I think a lot more people would end up doing music if it was sort of emphasised a bit more.

5.2.1 Students who had elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

While each of the students electing to participate in the music curriculum of Year Nine did not claim a sporting exemption as they enjoyed participating in both the co-curricular music and sporting programs, each student acknowledged the overriding sporting culture within the school. The strong sporting culture appeared to be of minimal influence, however, as the elective classroom music students were each highly motivated to study classroom music. This high level of motivation allowed the small group of elective classroom music students to overlook the cultural and potential peer group influences that may have otherwise proved negative.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think is good about this school?

JENNY: The music program.

INTERVIEWER: Is that the best thing for you?

JENNY: Yep, well that's why I'm going to school.

Despite this perception that music was one of the strengths of the school's curriculum, the school culture was described as not being supportive of music.

JENNY'S FATHER: Well certainly we have problems with music and we knew we would. We were warned about that before we came to the school, but if they miss their, for example, knowing about a test because they were at a music lesson, then that's tough and we've found that. We've found that already a couple of times. Music is a bit of a hindrance to some people, some of the teachers, and I guess we knew that before we came so we can live with

> that but we also knew on the other hand that the music was so strong that they would get such good support down with the staff and the students in the Music department that they would be strong enough to just let that go in that case, but it has turned out to be that way. We're a bit unusual too. We came to the school particularly for being involved with music and musical groups. We didn't really come for the academic, which is a bit strange. On the side of it as far as we thought, it would be good for them to be back at an academically orientated school but we really did come with music in mind so we're probably a bit strange in that way.

Parents of elective classroom music students perceived a lack of support for music by the school administration.

> PAUL'S MOTHER: Well when we first arrived I think, for instance with the music, there was a music building and the facilities, but there was a strong sense that the staff weren't supported.

. . .

> JENNY'S FATHER: I think there is no doubt that the school has a name as a music school. I think it's a matter of the Board and the higher staff levels appreciating and understanding that, so it's not just an external sales exercise, it's an internal sales exercise. It really needs to be done, you really need to do a sales job on the Board. You've got to really convince, you've got to help people to appreciate and understand music.

The Headmaster was described as the source of the overwhelming sporting culture in the school with a strong focus specifically on rugby.

> PAUL'S MOTHER: There are some fairly strong directions from the top as to what's to be supported and what's not to be supported.

. . .

> PAUL: I think sport. Especially rugby, it's favoured, especially by Mr Kellow [the Headmaster] and a lot of the teachers.

. . .

> MITCHELL: Things that are important, well Mr Kellow [the Headmaster] thinks rugby is really very important.
>
> . . .
>
> JENNY: Football he [the Headmaster] likes football. That's about it actually, I think that's all they liked.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Do you think the other people in the school, like the students and things also favour those particular areas, like the sports program?
>
> JENNY: Yeah I think the majority.

Paul suggested that the school's strong sporting culture was a reflection of society generally.

> PAUL: It's a sports school ... 'cause it's a good thing, like to have a lot of sport just with general well-being and there's, its more sports that is well noticed in the world I think.

Mitchell also acknowledged the high priority given to achievement generally and specifically in academic achievement for the purpose of favourable comparisons with schools in the local area and across the state.

> MITCHELL: They [teachers] really want us to be of a higher standard than some of the other schools, not only in Oakley but all around, all around the place.

Parents described the school as placing value on academic achievement. This was perceived to be for the purpose of promoting the school's core business of teaching and learning, leading to increased student enrolments and therefore economic viability. Parents' values were matched by the school's promotion of academic achievement.

PAUL'S FATHER: They honour winners and they give prizes to people who come first and all this sort of stuff, millions of prizes for everything.

. . .

DAVID'S MOTHER: Well I think the academic subjects are very important and that's because all of the competitions are compulsory, nothing is voluntary. They must see that as an important bench Mitchell. ... I think they think that music type subjects are important as a public image type promotion sort of thing. ... I think they promote what's going to make them look good in the community. ... It includes sport because sport is in the newspaper they're playing town teams and everything. ... But I mean that's why you, if you're going to send your children here that is what you're looking for.

. . .

JENNY'S FATHER: The school values high academic achievement. It values achievement at the highest possible level for the student. I think they're probably the overriding values. They value sporting prowess, achievement at that level. I think it is important for the school to maintain that level so that it attracts students. ... dollars related to bums on seats. How do you do that? You've got to influence the parents. What do they want for their children? They want their children to succeed in life. So I think the high academic and general high achievement levels, there's a very strong value in the School.

Mitchell's parents, while acknowledging the strong sporting culture within the school and identifying rugby specifically, described one of the strengths of the school to be the breadth of activities offered and music to be another area in which the school was particularly strong.

MITCHELL'S FATHER: You think of [the school] you think of music.

Despite sport and music being described as areas of strength, there was some reference to a division among the student population between the two activities.

MITCHELL'S FATHER: Whether there's a cross-pollinisation of students to sport and music, my feeling is that mostly you are either sporting or you are musical.

. . .

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER: I think for the children that aren't good at sport, that they can choose music or learning an instrument.

5.2.2 Students participating in instrumental or vocal music tuition who had not elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Students and parents described the school culture to be achievement focussed with academic and sporting achievement enjoying a considerably higher profile than most other activities.

TOM'S MOTHER: I felt that rugby, there was always a commitment to achievement academically ... but I think that the other area that was always being pushed positively was the sporting and I thought probably too much.

. . .

ANTHONY: Sport still plays a huge role, winning a game of sport. I'd say sport and academics would be pretty close, I'd suggest but, academics would still, because a lot of pressure is placed on people to do well academically at school.

INTERVIEWER: And music?

ANTHONY: It's more sport but music's starting to get more acceptable.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: What do you see the School seeming to promote, place value on?

RAY'S MOTHER: Academic achievement.

RAY'S FATHER: Winners, win at everything. So winners number one, winners number two.

RAY'S MOTHER: Win in sport.

RAY'S FATHER: It's good if you're a winner. If you're the other 99.9% of the population it's a real drag. ... The school values the people that produce

shining results on the day rather than what is the 'clay' that we have to work with here and how can we bring them all up.

RAY'S MOTHER: And credits at the school are a bit ordinary, participation is like a fail.

The focus on academic achievement was consistent with Tom's mother's own values as she described how both her sons had achieved at high levels in a range of activities while in Primary school and that the school culture and peer group influences had been negative.

TOM'S MOTHER: He was at Como Public, a lovely school but the kids in his particular year used to pay him out unmercifully because he was good at everything. He was a good musician, he was dux of the school, we didn't know that until the end of the year, he represented the school in every sport that they had as a sports team.

INTERVIEWER: And that was a negative

TOM'S MOTHER: That was a big negative he used to get paid out something fierce.

The high profile afforded to sport and specifically rugby in the secondary school was reported to have influenced the activities some boys elected to participate in.

ANTHONY: There's a lot of bias towards rugby and that's prejudice ... it's all rugby, rugby, rugby at this school. They don't even give netball or hockey any time really either, so yeah, it's just a bias towards rugby. I haven't noticed anything musical.

. . .

SCOTT: I do believe they have sort of faded out music, haven't really paid much attention to it, just mentioned it a little bit in assemblies, saying they've achieved this and that, but otherwise not much.

With Anthony perceiving the school to value rugby and his preferred sport being soccer, he was aware of the potential social costs if he was to pursue his interest in music while also participating in a soccer team outside of the school co-curricular program.

> ANTHONY: Generally I had a much better time in Year Eight than I did in Year Seven, maybe because I was getting teased a bit because I played soccer in Year Seven.

Anthony's parents described the school culture to be the primary influence in Anthony's reticence to participate in the school music program.

> ANTHONY'S FATHER: He's good friends with Ray Timms and Ray was in the Wyvern group [choir] in the first years. Ray got such a hard time I think Ray's pulled out of that now.
>
> ANTHONY'S MOTHER: Oh the culture, Anthony said, when thinking about the soccer, he had a lot of pressure to play rugby. He would have liked to have played both and he ended up playing both soccer and rugby.
>
> INTERVIEWER: At the school?
>
> ANTHONY'S MOTHER: At the school, he played some games of rugby in the B team in year seven. But I know when they had to choose whether to go into the orchestra, he was still playing the double bass, in the orchestra or cadets, he said, "Mum, I can't be a soccer player and in the orchestra.
>
> INTERVIEWER: That would be too much?
>
> ANTHONY'S MOTHER: Yeah, too much ostracism and I thought, "Yeah, that would be a problem".

The high profile enjoyed by rugby also influenced the decision of some boys not to participate in either the co-curricular ensemble music program or the elective classroom music program, despite having demonstrated an interest and level of commitment to music through private instrumental music tuition. This group of boys

had participated in instrumental music activities in Primary School and did not report a dislike towards music, rather a growing interest in rugby.

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: But at some point the crunch comes when they have to declare themselves almost. I'm trying to think how many of the sixty [twelve] main rugby teams would be in music as well, Anthony Graham is, Tazo is, those would be about the only two in the As.

Scott's mother suggested that those students who 'declare' themselves as music students "form a sub-culture within the school".

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: What I mean by a sub-culture, and they have them in every year, so those students you just spoke about now in your elective, they're the same mob. For all the rest of them even if you're not good at rugby, even if you're in the Bs, if you're a boy what you aspire to is success on the rugby field.

Despite the co-curricular ensemble music program consistently achieving in State and National competitions and a small number of students being awarded A.M.E.B. diplomas each year, the place of music within the strong school sporting culture appeared to be undervalued.

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: The point at which I realised how undervalued music was in this school was when I saw that list of children who had their Licentiates or A.Mus.A.s or whatever ... but no one understands quite how fantastic it is. No one really gives them credit for what they contribute to the school and what is involved for them personally in producing what they do.

The School's promotion of academic and sporting success was perceived to be for the purposes of marketing and school image.

> RAY'S MOTHER: If it wasn't a school sport it wouldn't be important.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Boys hockey for example, there are some boys who have represented [the region].

RAY'S MOTHER: Yeah but that is not as important because it is not a school sport, it doesn't give kudos to the school.

INTERVIEWER: So it has to be an activity that they can get something out of?

RAY'S MOTHER: Get kudos. What he [Ray's older brother] knows is that he is like a show pony. Because it is a school kudos thing, because the school does diving, him coming first at the Nationals is a credit to the school

. . .

ANGUS: I think it [school] encourages academic things but, I think it's like, sometimes it is more concerned with the image of the school. ... Academic at the top, but sometimes image, and like sport comes with image, you know what I mean? If it wins then the image is [good].

Angus' parents felt that music was an activity that was encouraged at the school as part of the school's promotion of offering an 'all round' education. The promotion of a culture supportive of an 'all round' education, however, was suggested to be related to the image the school was trying to promote within the broader community and was not necessarily reflected in the concrete operations that served to institute the goals and values of the School.

ANGUS' FATHER: The all round education of the child, that's what the school says. Sometimes I think it is for the good of the school. The school really, sometimes comes, in reality, comes before the actual good of the student.

ANGUS' MOTHER: The perception is that it is very good music at [the school]. ... A rounded education seems to involve music ... A lot of kids have obviously played music.

ANGUS' FATHER: Well I think in most modern schools music is encouraged.

INTERVIEWER: Would you say your values are being matched by the school?

ANGUS' MOTHER: No. ... That just comes back to my belief that John [Headmaster] is only interested in rugby. ... I think his personal interest is

> rugby and he's happy that with the fact that we've got music and we've got drama. There's no fire in the Headmaster, interested in that area. ... Just on the sporting side, the mere fact that there are girls at that school as well, there is nothing mentioned about the success of the hockey or basketball.
>
> ANGUS' FATHER: It's just rugby, rugby, the Head Rugby Captain gets a bible ... It's ridiculous, it's outrageous in a co-ed school, it's absolutely outrageous.

5.2.3 Students with limited or no previous instrumental or vocal music tuition who had elected not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Alex's father, in his capacity as a member of the senior staff at the school, was involved in the elective curriculum selection process. He perceived the parent body would resist an expansion of the elective curriculum program as the focus was on the academic subjects of Mathematics and English, particularly in the Higher School Certificate (HSC) of Years Eleven and Twelve.

> ALEX'S FATHER: I think you will meet some resistance from that, especially now the HSC results, we need to boost our Maths and English and there's always that argument.

While the academic focus appeared to be limited to the 'core' academic subjects, Alex's father did suggest that there was an attempt to spread the focus across a broader range of curriculum areas at the school.

> ALEX'S FATHER: It is trying to focus on the wider range of ability with the move to Hospitality, could be seen to transfer that down the line. The new facilities are going to cause more vocational, that's good for some kids, it's probably not good for Alexander.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Do you think we promote that part of our curriculum?
>
> ALEX'S FATHER: Not well, no.

The perception that the school culture valued academic achievement was based on school publications where "success, visible success for the school" (Alex's father) was consistently featured. This focus on academic achievement could be seen to reflect a broader societal focus with results from the Higher School Certificate annually receiving a high level of media attention with the publication of student names and schools where students achieved examination scores over 90% in any curriculum area. These results are then often compiled as league tables ranking school performance on organisational outputs rather than enriching learning opportunities for students. Where favourable comparisons can be made, the school publishes performance data as consumer information to enhance market accountability, as an independent fee paying school is evaluated and ultimately rewarded or penalised by parent choices (Whitty, Power & Halpin, 1998).

> INTERVIEWER: From your perspective as parents, what do you see the school placing value or importance on?
>
> BEN'S MOTHER: Academic achievement, particularly after the HSC. That's when you see what they do and how much they like to revel in the [student achievements].
>
> BEN'S FATHER: It's a marketing opportunity that they fully exploit.

The School's values for sporting and academic achievement were considered consistent with community values as student achievements in these areas provided opportunities to enhance the School's profile within the community.

> ALLISON'S FATHER: I guess society, it reflects society's broader recognition of achievements. If you look at the media they are reflecting sporting achievements. They are reflecting some academic achievements. ... So I think it is not surprising that they [the School] place an emphasis on that.
>
> ALLISON'S MOTHER: Part of their marketing.

The School's academic values were reflected in the end of semester student report where those curriculum areas considered as the 'core' academic subjects received a higher profile.

> ALEX'S FATHER: Well really when the report comes home you look at the top box and they're the important subjects and then you look at the subjects and then you look down the bottom and you see if there's any disasters, if there's not any disasters you just keep going.
>
> . . .
>
> RAY'S MOTHER: Our boys haven't shown any interest, like D&T, they look at the top part of the report and they go, "all the others don't matter".

The subjects considered 'important' and listed in the top part of the report are the 'core' academic areas of Mathematics, Social Science, English and Science. Foreign languages are also included in this section of the student's school report as the school had allocated six forty minute periods per week to French and Latin whilst all other 'non-core' subjects are allocated three forty minute periods per fortnight. The perception that the subjects listed in the top box were valued more highly than those subjects listed in the lower box on the student's school report was reinforced by the school's policy where comments on student progress were only given for those subjects that had a teaching allocation of greater than four periods per week. Of the subjects that did not have a teaching period allocation of at least four periods per week, teachers were required to grade students on a scale of A to E for achievement and effort only. The emphasis on 'core' curriculum areas, together with the publication of student achievements according to external criteria, particularly in literacy and numeracy, has been found to lead "to pressure on non-core subjects such as music and art" (Whitty, Power & Halpin, 1998, p. 87).

A consequence of the School's promotion of academic and sporting achievement above all other activities, through school award ceremonies, publications and assemblies, was the development of student values consistent with the school culture.

> BEN: Sport's probably [valued] higher than music because they don't make music compulsory.
>
> INTERVIEWER: If you were the Headmaster, would you change the priorities a little or keep them the same?
>
> BEN: Probably keep them the same.

Allison had enjoyed the non-elective classroom music curriculum and sang in a school choir throughout primary school and the first year of secondary school. Her low motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine, however, reflected a low value for music developed from her participation in the broader school culture.

> ALLISON: I think, not that music is bad, but I think they [the School] put that last. Like I think sport is always, if you're in a hockey game during choir time you have to go. You can't not go to hockey.
>
> . . .
>
> ALLISON'S FATHER: I think she would perceive it as not an important subject. They seem to learn pretty quickly, or form a view of what is important and what's not.

One explanation for the lower profile for music within the school culture was related to the nature of music activities being less visible to those students not actively participating in a music ensemble. Music ensembles frequently performed off the school site, travelling to community venues to perform at events that were not associated with School, minimising the potential student and staff audience.

> SOPHIE: Bands seem to go out and play at everything but I think sometimes students don't realise that there is so much music here, it's just no one seems to see that it's there. ... Sport plays every weekend whereas music they're not out there every weekend playing or anything.

5.2.4 Summary of findings related to school culture

The interview data revealed the school culture to have an over-riding influence on student motivation through the promotion of a set of cultural values. These cultural values were evident in the school's reward structure where student achievements in academic and sporting domains were described as receiving a higher profile than all other school activities. The school's promotion of student academic and sporting achievements was perceived to reflect broader societal values, with success in either of these domains providing opportunities to enhance the school's marketability within the parent community.

Music was perceived by some parents to be a valued activity by the school in the achievement of a school image where a breadth of available activities provided a full and enriching education for all students. There was reference, however, to a division between students participating in school-based music activities and high profile sporting teams. The division between students based on cultural values, together with the promotion of selected school activities and a reward system consistent with the dominant cultural values of sport and academic achievement, served as negative influences in student decisions to participate in school based music activities. This was particularly evident with boys' co-curricular activities where some students elected not to participate in school based music activities in order to establish membership within the rugby culture at the school.

Students who elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum were each highly motivated towards music and also participated in school sport, qualities that appeared necessary for students to balance personal interests and intrinsic motivations with the dominant cultural values of sport and academic achievement. The high level of motivation for music allowed the small group of elective classroom music students to overcome potential social costs associated with participation in an area perceived to have negative cultural and potential peer group influences.

5.3 Peer group influences

The influence of peers on students' elective curriculum decisions was generally reported as a secondary factor as students discussed elective curriculum choices with each other after making preliminary elective curriculum nominations according to a range of other factors.

> ANGUS: They usually choose on what they like before they take friends into account.
>
> . . .
>
> RAY'S FATHER: If things were more equal, I would say Ray could easily become swayed by what his mates were doing.
>
> . . .
>
> TOM: I know one thing that Commerce and Computing are on two lines each and some people changed their lines so they were in their friends' classes, I know that.

Positive peer group influences enhanced a student's motivation to elect a curriculum area as the curriculum area satisfied multiple student goals.

ANTHONY: Two reasons, 'cause my best friend is doing World History ... and we wanted to be in the same class. That's one, and also because I love history. ... obviously I'd enjoy World History with my best friend 'cause we'd have a lot of fun.

. . .

TOM: Technics, I did it because a few of my friends are doing it and also I thought it would be a lot of fun.

. . .

RAY: If you want to do this class and a friend is doing it as well then that's a big bonus, and if you were unsure about doing this class and another and you found a friend was in the other class then you would choose the other class straight away.

. . .

SCOTT: With Agriculture there wouldn't be many friends and in Computing there are a lot of people doing it so I'd have some people to talk to, which is pretty important I think, because otherwise you don't feel as comfortable in the classroom and you don't learn as much.

5.3.1 Students who had elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Students who had elected to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum represented a group of students for whom peer group values was least influential. While each of the elective classroom music students participated in discussions regarding individual student elective curriculum choices, these discussions were not intended to inform personal elective curriculum choices, rather, to satisfy curiosity. The contrasting task values and motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum, between each of the elective classroom music students and their respective peer groups, proved less influential as a factor influencing elective curriculum choice. Each of the students electing to participate in the music curriculum

possessed positive intrinsic task values for music and nominated preferred elective curriculum choices independently of any peer group related factors.

DAVID'S MOTHER: His friendships didn't influence his choices at all I don't think.

. . .

MITCHELL'S MOTHER: No, I don't think his choice would have been based on anybody else's either.

INTERVIEWER: Mitchell's friends, that he would consider to be reasonably strong, close friends, are they doing the same electives subjects that he's doing?

MITCHELL'S MOTHER: I don't think so.

MITCHELL'S FATHER: No.

MITCHELL'S MOTHER: Not music.

MITCHELL'S FATHER: Definitely not music, there may be a couple in Technics but I think he's doing what he wants to do.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: Do any of your friends learn a musical instrument?

ANNIE: Yes, one learns piano. Nerida and that's it they're not really into music at all.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: Did you talk to your friends about the courses, your choices?

JENNY: Um yeah, it was brought up on occasions but it didn't really

INTERVIEWER: Didn't help you decide?

JENNY: No

While the influence of peer group values appears to have been minimal for those students electing to participate in the classroom music curriculum, this group of students were aware of the potential influence of the peer group within the broader student cohort.

> MITCHELL: A few of the girls that I know chose it because their friends were going to be in it. They wanted the same group with their friends. ... Some other people just do it because they think, oh well it is all school, I don't care what I do I'll just do what my friends are doing, but I did it because I did what I thought I'd enjoy.
>
> . . .
>
> INTERVIEWER: Maybe not much of an influence for you but what about other people?
>
> JENNY: For the cool group people, like people in the really popular, popular group, they go with their friends.

Jenny suggested that those students she perceived to be 'popular' were most influenced by peer group values, referring to cases where a number of the 'popular' students had nominated Food Technology collectively, serving as a negative influence in her own decision to elect this subject.

> JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes. I said, "Do you want to do this one?" because she's very interested in nutrition and all kinds of things like that, but she said "No", and mostly I think it was because of peers and that she didn't want to be following that line of Food Technology. I think it's mostly to do with her friends, the stigma of doing Food Technology, and she said, "I don't want to do that, I just don't want to do that". We never could quite get to the bottom of that one.
>
> INTERVIEWER: You think it might be friends-related?
>
> JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes

Students electing to participate in the classroom music curriculum appeared to have formed a sub-culture within the Year Eight student cohort based on their high level of intrinsic interest in the classroom music curriculum being inconsistent with broader peer group values.

> INTERVIEWER: Did Annie choose anything with her friends?
>
> ANNIE'S MOTHER: No she didn't really because she's the odd one out. She's musical, that's where she wants to go at this stage. It's a really interesting thing, watching what's happening at school now, she is very alienated anyway at school by the choices that she has made.
>
> . . .
>
> JENNY'S MOTHER: She has a group of friends that all need encouragement, they're all so different.
>
> JENNY'S FATHER: And she knows that she's different. She doesn't try and be in the cool group. She knows that she's on the out there and she's learning to be proud of that. She's different and that's how she's been made.

The social implications for possessing a high level of intrinsic interest in a curriculum area not consistent with those students perceived to be 'popular' placed those students electing to participate in the classroom music curriculum outside of the broader student social network. Despite these social implications, the high intrinsic task values for music minimised the negative role of the peer group for those students electing to participate in the classroom music curriculum.

> JENNY: I think if I was, as I am, really happy about music like really like it a lot, then I don't think I would be accepted in the cool group because they're all sport oriented people and Ag oriented and stuff.
>
> INTERVIEWER: So it doesn't worry you?
>
> JENNY: No I'm quite happy with my friends.

INTERVIEWER: If someone was in the cool group and was doing music do you think they would keep doing music?

JENNY: No.

. . .

ANNIE'S MOTHER: She is comfortable with that at the moment, but if she was a child who was swayed by peer pressure or that she wasn't getting the rewards for the extra hassle, I guess, I think you would loose Annie from Music, because you've probably lost other students. ... The kids [two daughters] believe that it's worth missing out on socialisation with their peers and that in effect is what she is missing out on.

Paul's strong intrinsic motivation for music, and the limited influence of peer group values for music, was demonstrated through his involvement in a junior secondary school choir where he was one of only two boys in a choir of thirty-five voices.

PAUL'S MOTHER: He was in the Wyvern Singers for a couple of years and one of the last two boys in there and that was terrific because he developed a lot of musical understanding.

Paul's parents were aware of the possible social consequences of pursuing activities not consistent with the values of Paul's male peer group through the experiences of an older son who was attending the same school.

PAUL'S MOTHER: I think at that age there's a lot of peer pressure to say that [music] isn't a good thing to be doing.

PAUL'S FATHER: And the peer group, and particularly for the boys, when Nick was going through that, and I mean he was dropping out of music, and he dropped out, but at that stage there was a very good boy's singing group, about eight of them. It was on in the evening and it really diffused the boys.

PAUL'S MOTHER: The boys singing some girls' stuff.

PAUL'S FATHER: Yeah, the male objection to it.

While Mitchell did not select elective curriculum areas according to his friend's choices, he did discuss his choices with them and encouraged those of his friends who had nominated the same curriculum areas to choose that subject on the same line as himself to ensure they would be in the same class. This was common among the student group and appeared to be a feature of the final decision making process where friends may have selected the same elective curriculum area.

> MITCHELL: There was Technics in the middle and bottom one [timetable grid lines] and I said, "I'm doing the Technics in the bottom one. Do the bottom one with me so you're not doing a different one", so we kind of incorporated together.

Students across the three interview samples appeared to nominate three or four preliminary elective curriculum areas based on task values before applying a range of secondary factors to either strengthen or weaken motivation to participate in each of the initial elective curriculum choices. In Paul's case, he collected information from older students, including his brother and sister, to assess the nature of the respective curriculum areas and determine if his perceptions of the curriculum areas were consistent with those of students who had experienced each respective curriculum area.

> PAUL: There's a girl in Year Ten ... and she did Food Tech and on the way back from school she'd just talk about what she did, I didn't like it. ... My brother had done Computers and he'd done it for four years and he said that they'd done the same thing every year, so I didn't do that.

Consistent with the other interviewed elective classroom music students, Paul surveyed his friends' elective curriculum choices after making his own decisions, only to find that none of his friends had chosen classroom music, despite some of his friends studying instrumental music at relatively high levels. Paul suggested that the

consistency between his friends' curriculum choices and his nomination of French reflected common areas of interest more than direct peer group influences.

> PAUL: I think most of us decided on our own that we'd be doing this
>
> . . .
>
> PAUL'S FATHER: I've found that most of Pete's friends at school are the girls and yet in music there's only two girls and that just reflects that he's made the decision himself.

5.3.2 Students participating in instrumental or vocal music tuition who had not elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

The heightened value of peer evaluations with students in the early years of secondary school (Gross, 1989) featured more prominently in student elective curriculum choices with those students electing not to participate in the classroom music curriculum despite current participation in instrumental music tuition.

One of Tom's primary considerations when electing curriculum areas for Year Nine was that of his peer group. His mother described how he had discussed the elective curriculum selections with his peers before considering a range of other factors and that these discussions served as influential factors in his preferred elective curriculum choices.

> TOM'S MOTHER: He was thinking about Food Tech, Technics, Tech Drawing, things his friends were doing, Computers. ... I would say there was a lot of talk at school about it and he came home and said, so and so's mother isn't making him do such and such and so and so's mother is letting him do what ever he chooses but you won't let me do what I'm choosing.

Tom discussed his elective curriculum choices with his older brother Anthony who had also considered Technics as an elective subject based on his friend's elective curriculum choices. Tom's parents, however, did not allow Anthony the opportunity to participate in Technics, as they perceived the curriculum to be of little academic merit. Tom's older brother's experience reinforced his parents' decision not to allow peer group influence to be a deciding factor.

> TOM'S MOTHER: He said to us, "Oh I might do, that's right, Tom Edwards is doing Technics, I think I will do Technics", and we said, "Uh, uh". And then about half way through the first term he said, "Gee I'm glad you didn't let me do Technics", and Tom Edwards hated it. For two years he did something that he didn't really care about.

Peer and sibling influences featured in each of Ray's decisions to participate in music related activities. His first formal music education experiences were initiated after he became aware of a friend in Year Two of primary school who was attending individual piano lessons.

> RAY: My friend was playing piano and he came back with all these stickers on his hands and he said, "Oh piano is so good and look at all the stuff you get". And I wanted some stickers and stamps so I started piano.

The influence of peers in initiating musical engagement was also evident in Ray's decision to commence participating in a community choir at the age of ten.

> RAY: Nick was in that [choir] and I think he was going on to me about I probably should join and I thought that wouldn't be a bad idea, so I joined for a while.

Ray's decision to cease learning the piano and commence trombone lessons was again motivated by social goals.

RAY: I just chose trombone because I had some friends in the band.

In Angus' case, his strong intrinsic motivation to study Latin and World Geography minimised the influence of his peer group in deciding which elective subjects to study in Year Nine.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that your subject choices are at all determined by what your friends chose?

ANGUS: No not really, they are just what I wanted to do probably.

While Angus' elective curriculum choices were reported to have not been influenced by the peer group, there remained evidence of peer group influences on elective curriculum choice generally.

ANGUS' FATHER: I think, to be honest, a couple of guys followed Angus doing what he is.

ANGUS' MOTHER: He's quite a leader, it's just the way he knows his own mind, because he just does what he wants to do, he is own person and people just sort of go along with it.

The nature or direction of peer group influences reflected the social roles assumed by individual students. Where a student was perceived to be a leader, evidence of peer group influences was found in the curriculum choices of those students who identified the individual as a leader.

ANTHONY'S FATHER: He tends to be a bit of a leader, he was sort of organising people, people to do Art.

ANTHONY'S MOTHER: Friends do seem to be a big influence with the kids. And Art then became, when he was considering Art he had to try to influence someone to take Art. He is surprisingly influential.

. . .

> ANTHONY: I was already doing Art and Mitch wasn't sure and I said, "Well do Art with me because we'll have a lot of fun". I've got some great friends doing the electives and I reckon that's important to have.
>
> INTERVIEWER: How much peer influence is there in people choosing subjects, do you think?
>
> ANTHONY: A lot in these early years, I suppose in Year Nine and Ten because it's not fun if you don't have a good friend with you. Yeah I was definitely, I wanted to do it with my friends. All of my friends wanted to do it with my friends or me.

Anthony enjoyed the non-elective classroom music curriculum in Year Eight and had considered Music as one of his two possible elective curriculum areas as he held positive intrinsic task values for music generally.

> ANTHONY: Well don't tell my friends this, but I actually, I love listening to classical, not so much classical like Beethoven. I don't mind listening to them but I love listening to songs from Les Mis. and that sort of thing. I love that sort of music.

The potential for Anthony's peer group to act as a positive influence on his decision to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum could be found with his close friends participating in instrumental music at the time of the elective curriculum choices. One of his friends was playing French horn in the school orchestra and music featured in conversations between friends.

> ANTHONY: Romano plays French horn and he's grade four or something, he's quite good at it. ... Mitch, and he just picks up songs, he can ring me up and just start playing a song on the phone.

Despite the potential for Anthony's peer group to have a positive influence on his decision to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum, his parents described how Anthony perceived the school culture to be less supportive of music. He had already adopted values consistent with his peer group by joining a school

rugby team in Year Seven to balance his personal interests in soccer, allowing him to play both codes of football. Anthony's mother described Anthony's perception that continued participation in soccer and school based music activities would have led to "too much ostracism".

Student consideration of peer group values was found to influence, not only the nomination of curriculum areas, but also the specific timetable grid lines where a curriculum area was offered. Students compared elective curriculum nomination according to specific grid lines to ensure members of the peer group were in the same class. This was particularly evident in the nomination of Computer Studies where three classes were offered for Year Nine in the following year.

> RAY: See being with friends is also important in which class you choose, you don't want to go in there [Computing] without any friends.

. . .

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: Subjects appeared in two different lines, they thought if they didn't put their same choices in the same line, they wouldn't be in the same class. ... So they even got together and said, "Look if we want to be in the same class lets put the same choices on the same lines".

The peer group influence related to Scott's nomination of a specific Computing class was a secondary consideration, having already nominated Computing as a preferred elective curriculum area independently of his peer group. The peer group, however, did influence his decision not to elect classroom music despite it being a subject "he loved".

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: He also looked around at the peers who he would be travelling through music with and thought, no I can't, I don't belong. ... The group of children he would be travelling with, whether he was in the orchestra

> or any other thing, in his own peer group would not be his natural friendship system.

The influence of Scott's current friendship system was such that Scott perceived participation in school music activities to have potential negative social costs. He ceased participating in music activities in Year Seven soon after experiencing the school culture of the secondary school and developing an awareness of his peer group's values.

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: I still don't think that they accommodate gentle boys ... boys who are not empowered through whatever, through academic success or personal character, or whatever it is. They are not nice to them and often, of course, those children overlap with music electives. Those children are either drawn to it or you know there is some propensity within them that goes with those personal attributes.

Scott respected and enjoyed friendships with students who were involved in other school activities including the Army Cadet unit and rugby.

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: Whereas his real friends like Alex Howard ... was always going to be a cadet and that's a powerful force in children's lives, friendship systems.

Scott's peer group was particularly influential in his decisions regarding which co-curricular activities he would elect to participate in, as he perceived time spent with students outside of the classroom was the basis of social interactions and friendships.

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: He knows too that a lot of the activities that you like, it's out at cadet camp or music camp and that the fun that you are having is with that group of children ... that becomes the nucleus of your friendship systems. And I think he'd looked at Nick and Robbie and Ben, especially Ben and thought that is not who I am, I'm not one of them.

5.3.3 Students with limited or no previous instrumental or vocal music tuition who had elected not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Students with limited instrumental music experience appeared to have nominated curriculum areas consistent with their peer group's curriculum choices, however, the role of the student's peer group as an influential factor in elective curriculum choice was mixed.

Alex and Elizabeth were strongly influenced by their respective peer groups' curriculum choices. Their parents described the peer group to be the strongest influence that had to be contended with in attempting to guide Alex and Elizabeth into alternative curriculum areas, from those the students had initially nominated. Both Alex and Elizabeth's parents described how their children had made their initial elective curriculum choices following discussions with friends at school, well before discussing the range of elective curriculum choices available with their parents.

> ALEX'S MOTHER: I think he had sort of half decided that he'd go with the group, to a certain extent anyway.
>
> ALEX'S FATHER: There was certainly some pressure on. Some of his friends were doing World History and Computing.
>
> . . .
>
> INTERVIEWER: Do you think she discussed it [curriculum choices] with her friends?
>
> ELIZABETH'S MOTHER: Yes I do.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Before she filled in the form?
>
> ELIZABETH'S MOTHER: Yeah, before she even brought it home I think. And I think, as they get older they prefer to discuss that sort of thing with their

> peers rather than their mother. She used to share a lot of things but it is becoming less and less.

The peer group, as a factor influencing student decisions, appeared to be a factor with students in the transition stages between primary and secondary education.

> ELIZABETH'S MOTHER: I don't get much feedback about anything anymore and it's sad really because she used to come home bubbling and wanting to talk about what she did during the day. I've found that's changed, half way through Year Seven it probably started changing a bit.

Elizabeth acknowledged the influence of friends within her peer group as she had discussed her elective curriculum choices with them so as to inform her own curriculum choices. She had been instructed, however, by both her mother and a teacher at the school that she should choose curriculum areas according to her own intrinsic task values and resist any peer group influences.

> INTERVIEWER: Did you talk with friends before you chose your subjects?
>
> ELIZABETH: Yeah we did.
>
> INTERVIEWER: But you chose different ones.
>
> ELIZABETH: Yeah, I did because my tutor and my Mum were saying, "Don't choose your subjects because of your friends because it is your future and you're not going to see your friends, or you will but you need to deal with what job you get".

Despite the advice of her mother and a teacher at school, Elizabeth remained hesitant to nominate curriculum areas that she understood her friends would not be studying.

> ELIZABETH: I wasn't sure I really wanted to do World History for a time because I didn't know anyone that was doing it.
>
> INTERVIEWER: So your friends' choices actually influenced you a little bit?

> ELIZABETH: Well they did and I thought they would a little more but then I got the advice to ignore what your friends are doing and go for what I want to do. So I thought, "Oh well I don't really need to do their subjects", I didn't mind.

The influential role of Alex's peer group was evident in his participation in music related activities. His motivation to commence learning the trombone while in Year Five and play in a rock band as a Year Seven student were both based on his friends' participation in instrumental music.

> ALEX: Trombone was an interest but. Oh well I think that was because Scott was doing it at the time, maybe Robbie, so I thought maybe I could give it a go too but I never got around to having the lesson or anything like that because it was just pushed away.

. . .

> ALEX'S MOTHER: Alexander, his friends have been talking about setting up a band for as long as I can remember but they've never actually done it. I don't think, have they?
>
> ALEX'S FATHER: Well he, Alexander didn't play an instrument, we didn't force it.

While Alex's peer group had provided a positive influence with decisions regarding his participation in music related activities, a shift in peer group values in the first two years of secondary school resulted in the peer group becoming an increasingly negative factor towards school music activities. Alex's motivation for music was evident in his continued participation in a school choir, however, the shift in peer group music values towards non-school based music activities, specifically in popular music styles, resulted in Alex being one of only two boys in the choir and a need for him to overcome potential social isolation if he was to continue.

> ALEX: I have been in choir every year since year three.

INTERVIEWER: Are you still in choir now?

ALEX: Yeah, I'm in Senior Choir now.

INTERVIEWER: You like that?

ALEX: Yeah, I do like it. I get a bit teased or whatever about being a singer, but I still do it because I like, not that kind of singing, but singing to songs on the radio and so I do it to keep my voice okay, or whatever.

While Allison, Ben and Sophie's elective curriculum choices were consistent with a number of their friends' choices, they had each made preliminary elective curriculum nominations prior to any discussions with their peer groups.

BEN: I asked them what they were doing, but no, I didn't get any ideas off them. I knew what I wanted to do.

Allison suggested the grouping of friends in the same elective curriculum areas reflected common areas of interest and that the direct influence of peer group choices was only evident when elective curriculum nominations resulted in isolation from friendship networks.

ALLISON: As soon as I got the sheet I just ticked both of them because I knew what I wanted to do and my friends are doing Graphics and Art. Most of my friends are doing Art and something else. I think most of us enjoy Art like almost everyone in my year group is doing Art and something else.

INTERVIEWER: Did they check it out with each other first before they decided?

ALLISON: Most of them did, yeah. They were talking about it because you don't want to pick a subject, even if you like it, you don't want to pick one where you've got no one.

In Sophie's case, the absence of friends in the World History class proved a negative factor and influenced her decision to choose Art over World History, having identified both subjects as satisfying intrinsic and utility task values.

> SOPHIE: You don't really want to go to a subject where you have no one to talk to. If you were there by yourself it wouldn't be as fun. ... A lot of the people I talked to, like all the boys, there's more boys in the World history class, I needed someone to talk to so I found that with Art I had a lot of people doing it as well, so that helped.

5.3.4 Summary of findings related to peer group influences

Students' initial curriculum choices were generally based on personal task values and perceptions of competence, with peer related influences acting as secondary factors in the enhancement or diminishment of intrinsic motivation to participate in preferred curriculum areas. The peer group's level of influence appeared dependent on the individual's task values for each initial curriculum choice. For example, the influence of peer group factors was minimal for students reporting high task values for specific curriculum areas, while student's whose task values for preferred curriculum areas were not as high, sought additional information from peers to facilitate decision-making.

Where students identified more than two elective curriculum areas satisfying high task values, positive peer group influences related to one of the preferred curriculum areas enhanced student motivation to elect the respective curriculum area. A common feature of student curriculum choices where elective curriculum areas were offered in more than one timetable grid line was the deliberate matching of personal nominations with members of the peer group to ensure friends would be in the same class.

The school culture appeared to cultivate peer group values consistent with the over-riding sport culture within the school. This produced a shift in peer group values in the first two years of secondary school with students suggesting possible social consequences for pursuing activities not consistent with the values of the dominant peer group. The perception that participation in the elective music curriculum presents potential negative social costs was reported to have influenced some students' decisions not to elect classroom music, despite reporting positive intrinsic task values for music.

The social goals of peers and friends were found to be particularly influential for students identified as 'popular' as these students attempted to balance personal interests and intrinsic motivations with the dominant values of the individual's social group. Where a student's preliminary elective curriculum choices resulted in isolation from friendship networks, the influence of peer group factors was heightened. The absence of friends in a preferred elective curriculum area was reported as a considerable negative factor. One strategy employed by more influential students was the attempt to persuade members of the peer group to change an elective curriculum nomination to match personal choices so as to avoid social isolation.

Figure 5.2 summarises the role of peer group factors in student elective curriculum choice with the nature of the influence depending on the peer group's values for specific curriculum areas. Where members of a student's peer group had nominated the same curriculum area, a student's motivation was enhanced through the ability to satisfy both intrinsic and social goals. The influence of positive task values for a

preferred curriculum area, however, was weakened where student's perceived the peer group to have low task values or there was an absence of friends in the preferred curriculum area. The degree to which the peer group influenced elective curriculum choice was dependent on the level of task values held by the student: that is, the lower the levels of task values the higher the degree of influence from the peer group.

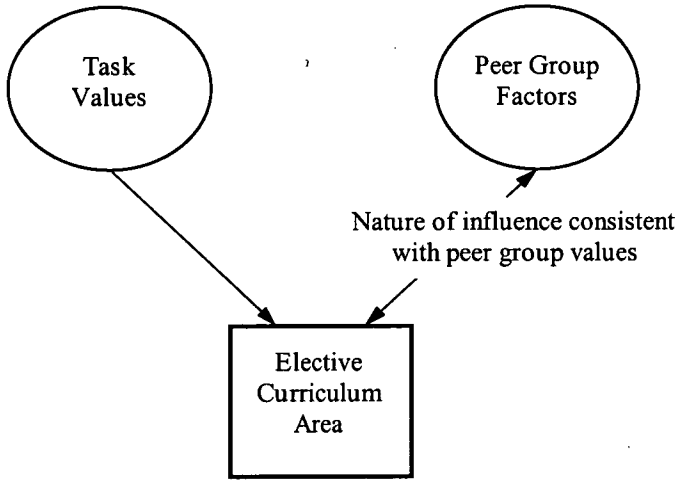

Figure 5.2: Peer group values as a factor in elective curriculum choice

5.4 Family values

A large proportion of the parent population was supportive of music related activities through the provision of opportunities and resources for students to engage in instrumental or vocal music tuition at an additional fee to the school fees. Of the eighty-two students enrolled in Year Eight, 65% were participating in instrumental or vocal tuition at the time of elective curriculum choices and 76% of students in the Year Eight cohort had undertaken individual instrumental music lessons for at least one year. Despite the high student participation rates in instrumental and vocal music tuition, parental influence on elective classroom music curriculum choice was not consistent. While many parents encouraged their children to choose freely based on

intrinsically orientated task values, others actively directed, encouraged and occasionally controlled their child's elective curriculum choices.

In choosing to enrol their children in a school that valued academic achievement, a number of parents had selected a model of education that was consistent with their own values. This group of parents promoted elective curriculum areas perceived to be academically orientated while students generally applied intrinsic task values to elective curriculum choices. Where parental goals did not match the student's intrinsic task values, some parents applied extrinsic constraints to shape their child's decision making by offering task-contingent rewards (Harackiewicz & Sansone, 2000). This came in the form of compromised curriculum choice where one of the available elective curriculum choices was nominated according to the parents' goals for the child, with the child then receiving a reward for participating in the parents' elective curriculum choice.

The task-contingent rewards were of operational significance as they were unrelated to the goals they were intended to institute. The rewards included a trip to France for one student, while other parents traded one elective curriculum choice off for another. Students could nominate an elective curriculum area according to personal intrinsic motivations if they participated in a curriculum area that satisfied parental goals.

5.4.1 Students who had elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

The influence of a positive home environment for music was evident with each of the students electing to participate in the classroom music curriculum. The family's

provision of musical opportunities for their children from an early age was found with four of the five students experiencing music making both in the home and through structured group music classes with local music education providers before attending primary school. The facilitative actions of the parents in exposing and encouraging participation in music experiences before attending school reflected the value music enjoyed in the home environment. Further opportunities for musical engagement were later encouraged throughout the Primary School years and Years Seven and Eight of Secondary School through the provision of instrumental or vocal music tuition and the associated resources.

> DAVID'S MOTHER: I took them, oh they used to call it Kodaly. When they were three, I took them to those ... they were group lessons and they were fun. They used to sing and just move.
>
> . . .
>
> JENNY'S MOTHER: We did take them to a lot of music stuff. I took them to all the Play School and all the little kid things and stuff at the Opera House and we did go to a group music class.
>
> . . .
>
> MITCHELL'S MOTHER: He went to, because they did music and things like that at Nashdale and then there was a sort of music appreciation thing at Oakley, OMA [district music association].
>
> INTERVIEWER: For him to do that though, you enrolled him, he asked to enrol, or you thought it would be a good idea?
>
> MITCHELL'S MOTHER: I think we thought it would be a good idea because he had such a good ear and could just sing things and he enjoyed it. They just did a bit of listening to music and playing tambourines and things like that and sang and he used to enjoy that class, and then he went on to keyboard from there.

The motivation for parents to provide and encourage their children's involvement in music originated from at least one parent in each family having had previous positive music experiences and sharing the positive intrinsic task values of their child for music making activities.

> ANNIE: Dad likes opera. I think he likes male singers.
>
> INTERVIEWER: He plays?
>
> ANNIE: He plays the accordion, he has a great time with that.
>
> . . .
>
> JENNY'S FATHER: Veronica [mother], she's actually done grade seven piano or something and she's played more music than me.
>
> . . .
>
> MITCHELL'S MOTHER: I had piano lessons, yes, when I was nine, ten and eleven.
>
> MITCHELL'S FATHER: It [school] was very choral, very strong choirs. I followed that pretty well all the way through high school. Some brilliant music teachers who took us on tours, and with St Paul's College, Sydney Town Hall, big requiem.

David's family had a lengthy association with music through his older sister, who was studying elective classroom music in Year Eleven at the same school and his mother having learned the piano to Seventh grade A.M.E.B. level while at school. David's father was a music teacher at a different school and his mother suggested his father's involvement in music might have had an indirect influence in his decision to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum.

> DAVID'S MOTHER: I think he chose it because he thought that might be what his Dad, it might be something that would please him. Because if you knew Dan he was always searching for something that, so whether he thought that would be something in common with his Dad I don't know.

Further evidence of the facilitative actions of parents in providing optimal opportunities for participation in music activities for their children was found in parents' decisions regarding choice of school.

> JENNY'S FATHER: One of the reasons we chose [the school] for her and for the other kids, but especially for Jenny I suppose, is that she wanted to do Music and she wanted to do it with good tuition in a well-established school in the music area with good teachers.
>
> . . .
>
> INTERVIEWER: Why did you choose that school?
>
> PAUL'S MOTHER: From my point of view, interestingly, because I thought a lot about music, because it did offer music and that's always been important to me. ... I think that was important, so the fact that it was a supportive environment and the music, very much the music.
>
> PAUL'S FATHER: ... From a domestic point of view, we would have been better off in Bingo but we came and looked at the schools and I think that swayed us to Oakley, even though it was a compromise for me, was the music. ... Everybody should have exposure to music, everyone who goes to the school.
>
> . . .
>
> INTERVIEWER: What do you value about the school?
>
> ANNIE'S FATHER: That they have actually had music. ... If it wasn't for the music at [the school], and how the girls have fallen into music, there would have been a patch where we would have looked elsewhere.
>
> . . .
>
> RAY'S MOTHER: So one of the strongest things he could do by going to [the school] was that he was going to be able to play cello again.

While each student electing to participate in the classroom music curriculum had parents who shared their positive intrinsic task values for music, the nature of the

parents' influence and support for participation in the classroom music curriculum was heightened by a sense of regret in the parents' own school music education.

INTERVIEWER: Ron, would you like to have learned piano for longer?

PAUL'S FATHER: Yes and it probably colours my encouragement of these ones [children] too. I wish I had been at a school say like [the school] where there was more exposure, more of my peer group doing it. I would probably have kept going then and I regret now that I can't play the piano.

. . .

ANNIE'S FATHER: Ours [school music] was disgusting. It was just basically a little bit of theory and singing songs. And if you didn't sing this song well to start with we would do it again for another lesson, sometimes for an entire term. We would do three songs because half a dozen people at the back stuffed it up every week. It was an absolute disaster.

INTERVIEWER: Would you like to have learned an instrument?

ANNIE'S MOTHER: Yeah, I would love to have. ... Because we felt so strongly that we had missed out, right from when they were babies, I have always played different types of music to the children, even if I didn't necessarily like or understand it myself and we have taken them to as many different performances as we could possibly do with them.

. . .

MITCHELL'S MOTHER: I had a girlfriend who was very good at music and she and I had to play duets together at the concert and I always felt so terrible, having to play these duets with her because she was so good.

INTERVIEWER: Would you like to have studied music at a higher level?

MITCHELL'S MOTHER: Yes

INTERVIEWER: Do you regret now, having done two years but no more?

MITCHELL'S MOTHER: Yes

. . .

> JENNY'S MOTHER: I wanted to do Music, Ray. I'd actually applied to do Music when I was in Year 8 or something and the music teacher had rung six of us up and said, "Don't do it". It was a great help. "Don't do it because the class has too much variation in the standard and you girls have all done Grade 6 piano or something and so you'll be bored" and I think it was the worst mistake I ever made actually. ... and I now regret that because I was really, I'm really ignorant on the breadth of music, I don't understand music, how something is put together. Doing piano to Grade 7 didn't really teach me very much.

Jenny's father, having commenced piano lessons and singing in a community choir at the age of thirty, discovered the intrinsic benefits associated with music making and felt strongly that his children should enjoy similar benefits through their participation in music making activities.

> JENNY'S FATHER: I just discovered music and I just loved it and so the ambitions I haven't been able to achieve I've been more than happy to have my children to fulfil them for me. ... I think both Vicki and I have regrets in the music area. I feel now that I've got musical ability, that it's just wasted, that it's dormant. ... The fact that I didn't care about it because I didn't know any better. I wasn't envious of the guys playing in the band I didn't know what joy they got out of playing an instrument. Had I known I would have been furious.
>
> JENNY'S MOTHER: Probably from what we've just said we'd have to be careful not to push our children to do Music because we both regret the gap but in our case it actually hasn't happened that way so we've given them lots of musical opportunities but they've grabbed them and now, now we don't push them at all. Now we have to hold them back.

With Jenny's strong motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum being shared by her parents, the discussions between Jenny and her parents revolved around the choice of a second elective curriculum area where they discussed the need for Jenny to be sufficiently challenged.

> JENNY: Well Mum went to the subject choices day and she said, "Food Tech would be good but you're good at cooking anyway and this might be a class for people who can't really cook as well".

The promotion of appropriate levels of challenge by Jenny's parents, consistent with the 'flow' construct (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), suggested a home environment that was supportive of task participation more than task achievement relative to others. Such a home environment is likely to provide supportive feedback, promoting a sense of competence through successful achievements in meaningfully challenging tasks.

5.4.2 Students participating in instrumental or vocal music tuition who had not elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Parents of students participating in the instrumental and vocal music tuition program reported favourable attitudes towards music education, providing the initial exposure and support for their child's participation in instrumental music. The positive parental support for student engagement in music education was also evident in the continued provision of musical opportunities through the payment of music tuition fees, purchase of a musical instrument, and encouragement of co-curricular music participation. When considering student participation in the elective classroom music curriculum, however, parents' positive values for music appeared to be limited to the co-curricular ensemble program. Strong parental values towards academically orientated elective subjects proved to be a negative factor when considering classroom music.

> MITCHELL: Some parents want their kids to do what they did, just follow in their footsteps and other ones just think that if they do some subjects they think it's kind of a bludge subject so they don't really want them to do that, because I've got a mate, he didn't have much say in it at all in his electives. His parents wrote down what it was and sent it away without him even really looking at it.

. . .

ANTHONY: I do know a couple of people in my year that were influenced by their parents. I don't think that's the right way to go.

. . .

RAY'S MOTHER: What we have always said about Music is, "Music in the HSC is a dreadful subject to do. You can put your whole heart into Music and you can get really low marks". We actually know people who have done that. ... but as a background conversation, Music is a risky subject to do if you want to do academics, you're not going to use that Music.

Despite Tom's parents both regretting limited musical opportunities in their own school education and this acting as motivation to encourage each of their three children to study instrumental music through private music tuition, languages and World History were perceived to be of higher educational value for Tom's elective curriculum choices. Tom's parents' motivation to elect Latin satisfied a utility goal related to the perceived benefits in the development of English language skills. English had been the curriculum area where Tom had experienced least success relative to his other curriculum areas.

TOM: And my parents, the main reason they would make me do it is that because I'm really solid at maths and science but English, I'm still in A1 but I'm at the very bottom of the class and Mum and Dad would really like me to go well in English and that's my bad spot. And like my sister and brother are very good at English, I'm not good at it so that's why they want me to do Latin because its,

INTERVIEWER: They think it might help?

TOM: Yeah, they think it's the base language of all languages.

When asked about Latin as an elective subject, Tom described how it was his least favourite subject in Year Eight and that he "didn't want to do it" as an elective subject in Year Nine as he "didn't really have any fun doing it".

In choosing to enrol Tom at the school in Year Seven, Tom's parents perceived the school to offer a supportive achievement orientated academic environment that was consistent with their own values. When considering the available elective curriculum areas, they encouraged Tom to nominate subjects that they perceived to have some "academic rigour". In the case where Tom nominated elective curriculum areas perceived not to contain "academic rigour", his parents intervened, overruling his decision to enrol in Food Technology, Technics, Tech Drawing or Computing Studies.

> TOM'S MOTHER: We said, "Not an option", especially since we had been fairly insistent with the two older ones [sister and brother], that they make some choices that they weren't particularly keen on and then turned out they were thrilled that they were forced into doing.

To accommodate both the academic goals of Tom's parents and Tom's intrinsic task values, Tom's parents offered a task-contingent reward. The reward of one elective curriculum choice free from parental influence was given following one elective curriculum choice being selected according to the parents' goals for Tom.

> TOM'S MOTHER: David said, "It is like this, the school is running an elective class [in Latin] and I insist that you do it since I am paying the school fees and you can have free choice for your other elective".

A task-contingent reward was also offered to Alex where his preferred elective curriculum areas were not consistent with his parents' task values.

> ALEX'S MOTHER: I was keen for him to do a language
>
> ALEX'S FATHER: You were keen for him to do French.

INTERVIEWER: Was he keen to do French?

ALEX'S FATHER: Not really.

ALEX'S MOTHER: Not particularly. Well he originally chose World History, was it?

ALEX'S FATHER: Yeah.

ALEX'S MOTHER: That was what he put into Louise and then we discussed it some more and compromised with him doing Latin. ... So I said, "Well you do Computing if you do Latin", he was happy with that.

Anthony described one case where parent motivation for their son to participate in the elective French curriculum was so strong that a trip to France was offered as a task contingent reward to shape student motivation.

ANTHONY: I do know a couple of people in my year that were influenced by their parents. I don't think that's the right way to go but.... like French. I know people who were bribed to do French, like they'd go on a trip to France or something like that.

INTERVIEWER: Is this boys or girls?

ANTHONY: Boys. Like, French is a good subject to do and Bert doesn't mind doing French so.....no, I don't think it's the right way to go myself. He was going to choose it anyway, the bribery is an added incentive.

The application of task contingent rewards was also found to exist with some students who elected to perform in either of the two School concert bands, as participation in either band granted student exemption from the otherwise mandatory requirement of participation in the School army cadet unit up to and including Year Ten.

ANNIE: Well, I find heaps of people hate cadets so they take up an instrument just to get out of it, so that also lets down a lot of the bands because people don't want to be there. They don't want to rehearse, so that sort of lowers the standard almost because you spend half the time trying to get people that don't want to be there to be quiet and then it's a waste of time.

> ... He [brother] doesn't really want to be in cadets, that's where I think he wants to take up an instrument.

For those students whose extrinsic goal was to avoid participation in the School army cadet unit, the concert band program served as a means through which to satisfy this extrinsic goal. One consequence of student motivation based on an extrinsic goal is any prior association of the activity to intrinsic goals, such as mastery or competence, is likely to diminish (Shah & Kruglanski, 2000). Student motivation is also likely to diminish when the tangible reward is ultimately withdrawn as the activity's original association with the extrinsic goal has been diminished. This is likely to occur as students move into Year Eleven where the mandatory requirement of students' participation in the army cadet unit no longer applies.

Where parents did not negotiate elective curriculum choices through task contingent rewards, parental influence was limited. This was evident in Scott's case where negative peer group values towards participation in school-based music activities were reported to 'override' positive parental values for music, influencing his decision to cease participating in the instrumental music tuition program and the school orchestra.

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: I deeply regretted his loss of his music to him ... I was really happy to support Scotty's decision to give away the trombone, partly because ... there is only so far you can go as a parent in pressing an issue ... Music is not going to become a battleground. ... There is a tension there because I am acutely aware that children have to be responsive to the realities that they confront in their own lived life at school. It is no good me saying, "Paul [older brother] you will have, find it just so fantastic to keep on with your cello. Like now you might think that all your friends are over here and they all value rugby and they think you're a dork for staying in orchestra, but really one day it will be fantastic". ... I can't override those realities ... Like that's not good parenting I don't think.

Scott's elective curriculum choices and his decision to cease participating in the school orchestra had also been influenced by his older brother's experiences.

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: World History was always going to be one, partly because Paul loved it so much. ... So Scotty thought this would be a good thing to do and he asked his brother's advice about the other elective and Paul said, "Well don't do Latin Scotty because it's too hard for who you are, you won't enjoy it", I reckon that was great. And his decision was partly mediated by Paul's experiences in orchestra being a boy, except Paul is a strings boy, that makes it harder.

Angus had nominated his preferred elective curriculum choices before discussing the range of elective curriculum subjects available with his parents. As his preferred areas of study were consistent with his parent's preferred elective curriculum choices, discussions were limited and the level of parental influence negligible.

> ANGUS: They were mainly fine with what I wanted to do really. They didn't have a great deal of input.
>
> . . .
>
> ANGUS' FATHER: There was very little discussion actually.

The consistency between Angus's interests and his parents' curriculum values, without any overt guidance from his parents, suggested that the cultural setting within the family environment had been influential in his development of interests and areas of engagement. Angus's interests in Music, Latin and World History had all been encouraged through the actions of his parents in exposing and supporting his developing interests in these areas.

> ANGUS' FATHER: I would have liked him to have done formally music, he's doing music on guitar outside, so it would have been very good. ... We both encouraged Angus to take up an instrument.
>
> ANGUS' MOTHER: I was good at Latin for some reason ... I really liked Latin.

INTERVIEWER: That's interesting, did you talk to him about that?

ANGUS' MOTHER: Yes I did. I think he knows I did Year Twelve Latin. ... Angus has always been interested in history and I think that is a genetic thing. You loved History, I loved History.

The recreational interests of Angus' immediate family had been a formative influence on his development of interests and were reflected in his elective curriculum choices.

ANGUS' FATHER: I think there's also the fact that Charlie [mother] is a writer, you know, and that influences all of the kids. I want to be good at English and I like words and Latin is just so good for words. So there's an element of that as well.

ANGUS' MOTHER: We're all good writers.

ANGUS' FATHER: Yeah I know, but I think, but there's more there because you are writing all of the time and they're aware of their mother sitting down and writing. So obviously there is a feed off there. ... I've kept the history of Europe by my bed. I love delving into this great wonderful body of the history of Europe. It has always been by my bed actually, so I mean there has always been, subconsciously you know, Mum and Dad are reading about history and I'm interested in history, sort of thing.

ANGUS' MOTHER: Well we've got lots and lots of books in the other room and I suppose there's lots of history books there.

ANGUS' FATHER: Yeah there are a lot of history books.

While both parents were supportive of music, their involvement in music had been limited to their own childhood and was no longer an enacted value, as opposed to languages and history where Angus' mother had just had a book published and both parents had considerable success in History and English while at school.

ANGUS' FATHER: Genetically I think, Charlie's [mother] father won the Tennison medal twice ... my sister virtually topped all the way through in English and History, and I topped History for about three years.

ANGUS' MOTHER: I am quite sure if I was a professional musician they would have chosen music as an elective. I mean, I wouldn't force that one way or the other, I think it is just the climate of the house. ... I think it's a mixture of genetics and environment. They were always read to at an early age, you know as I said, if I had been a professional musician they might have gone down that path too. There's a lot of musical genes in the family.

The significance of the family cultural setting in the exposure and development of areas of interest was further highlighted with Anthony's decision to elect World History.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ask your brothers what kinds of things they enjoyed?

ANTHONY: Yeah, that's where I got the World History from. Brett, my second oldest brother, he absolutely loved it, he's so brilliant at World History, especially World War II and he can just recite any date or anything, he really impressed me and he just loved it so much. He didn't like to work too hard but in History he just found himself picking up a history book and reading it and I just thought if it's that much fun.

The experience of older siblings had also featured in Ray's decision not to elect classroom music as his brother had reported less favourable comparisons with classroom music and other elective curriculum areas.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever think of doing Music as a subject?

RAY: Kind of, Arno did for the first amount of time.

INTERVIEWER: Is he doing it now?

RAY: No, he switched from Music into French. I think he just found it too theoretical even with him doing musicianship and all that. He was just hating it, all the assignments they were getting and so he changed and from what I've heard from him I didn't want to do it.

5.4.3 Students with limited or no previous instrumental or vocal music tuition who had elected not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

The nature of parental influences for students with little or no instrumental or vocal music tuition ranged from positive parental values for music, where cost had been a prohibitive factor in the provision of musical opportunities beyond the classroom music curriculum, to less positive parental values based on parents' limited or negative musical experiences while at school.

> INTERVIEWER: Did you like it?
>
> SOPHIE'S MOTHER: Music? Not really. ... I'm not musically minded, not as far as playing an instrument.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Do you wish you could?
>
> SOPHIE'S MOTHER: No.
>
> INTERVIEWER: What about Sophie? Do you think it's important that Sophie learns an instrument?
>
> SOPHIE'S MOTHER: I don't think it's important but I suppose as far as she's concerned it's whatever she wants to do I guess. She did comment on taking up the flute but as I said, extra money. ... There's no use putting myself in debt. I mean, she can always take it up later.
>
> . . .
>
> ALEX'S MOTHER: I did learn guitar for a while but I hated it. ... I could never play it anyway, and I think that's why I hate the guitar so much, I can't bear the sound of it. ... He has said yeah, he wishes he could play the guitar. Which fell on deaf ears.
>
> ALEX'S FATHER: I'm a bit more interested in the Humanities it would be easy, I think that would be more significant if we had strong musical influences in our lives. We haven't, we don't play instruments. ... We weren't a musical family, Mum was a teacher and I suppose played the piano a little bit but there was never an instrument around the house and I think that is

important.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever take music lessons?

BEN'S MOTHER: Music lessons, no.

INTERVIEWER: How would you describe music when you went to school, classroom music?

BEN'S MOTHER: Poor.

BEN'S FATHER: Yeah it was a joke lesson.

With the level of parent interest and positive task values for music being significant in the provision of musical opportunities (Sosniak, 1985; Howe & Sloboda, 1991a), parents with limited or negative experiences of music at school were less likely to promote classroom music as an elective curriculum area for Year Nine. Rather, the cultural setting of the family provided opportunities for the stimulation and development of a student's areas of interest through encouragement and the provision of opportunities for task participation consistent with the recreational interests and task values of parents. Where parents held expectations for their child's participation in selected activities, the child's motivation and behaviour were shaped to match parental expectations, consistent with the *family script* (Davidson & Borthwick, 2002). The script serves as an inter-subjectively shared cultural schema that prescribes forms of social interaction for participants, guiding behaviour (Cole, 1996).

Elizabeth's motivation to elect Agriculture for Year Nine reflected the interest she had developed in animals, having lived on the family farming property all of her life.

ELIZABETH'S MOTHER: We've always been associated with the land and my brothers and sister are still on a property in Trangie and the girls love going there on the holidays.

Ben's nomination of Technical Drawing and Technics as his preferred elective curriculum subjects reflected an interest developed in each of these areas through the recreational interest of other family members. Ben's father provided regular opportunities for him to participate in related activities and taught both subjects at the school, while his older sister had participated in the elective Technical Drawing class.

INTERVIEWER: How come you really wanted to do Tech Drawing?

BEN: My sister did it. I enjoyed watching her do it so I thought I could do it.

INTERVIEWER: Did you discuss these subject choices with your parents? Are they happy with them?

BEN: Yes. ... Dad sometimes teaches Tech Drawing as well.

The nature of sibling influences in arousing interest and providing role models was also evident in Allison's elective choices of Food Technology and Art.

ALLISON: All my family cooks like it used to be Sarah, then Emily started making things, then Laura started making things when Sarah left.

. . .

ALLISONS' FATHER: Sarah would do her Art for hours and Allison would have seen that.

ALLISON'S MOTHER: It's just kind of a positive perception gained from someone around you and you just tuck it away unconsciously I guess.

ALLISON'S FATHER: I suppose it is obtained by osmosis as well. When you have got other people that are doing those things and they are reasonably happy about it, that creates a fairly positive image about those subjects.

Parents, whose motivation was for their child to participate in elective curriculum areas perceived to be academically based, exerted more influence on their child's elective curriculum choices.

> ELIZABETH'S MOTHER: She wanted to do Commerce but I did talk her out of doing Commerce because I thought World History and Geography would have been more important to her career choice.
>
> . . .
>
> ALEX: Mum reckons Latin would be better and I wanted to do Computer Studies for fun.
>
> . . .
>
> ALEX'S MOTHER: Well he always had Computing in mind and then.
>
> ALEX'S FATHER: As a personal, he had an interest in it so he wants to do that personally.
>
> ALEX'S MOTHER: But he knew that I wouldn't approve, or you probably don't either, and so that was half the choices done. And so there was a big discussion because there's only one left to choose from and I wanted him to do a lot of things. I didn't want him to do Computing at all. ... There wouldn't be anything new there for him, and he is quite academic and I wanted him to push in academics.

5.4.4 Summary of findings related to family values

Parental support for music was evident with 65% of all Year Eight students participating in the instrumental and vocal music tuition program. Despite parents demonstrating favourable attitudes towards music education through the provision of musical opportunities and resources, parental values for music were often limited to

the co-curricular ensemble program. Parental curriculum values were generally consistent with the school academic culture that promoted academic achievement in 'core' curriculum areas. The perception that elective classroom music was not an academically orientated curriculum area served as a negative factor in student decisions to participate in classroom music.

With the exception of the small group of highly motivated students who elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum, peer group values were found to mediate the influence of positive parental values. This was evident with students reporting peer group values for school music to be limited or negative in some cases and these values influencing decisions not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum, despite positive parental values for music. Parental influence was found to be important, however, in cases where strong academically orientated goals were held for their child's education. Where a student's intrinsic task values were not consistent with parental goals, parents would apply extrinsic constraints through task-contingent rewards (Harackiewicz & Sansone, 2000) to shape student motivation.

Parental influence was evident in the development of student intrinsic task values, which in turn influenced student elective curriculum choice. The cultural setting of the home environment provided opportunities for the stimulation and development of student intrinsic task values through the support and provision of opportunities for participation in areas consistent with the interests and task values of parents. Students who interpret the facilitative actions of parents as expectations for task engagement are likely to "support the scripted (pre-determined) "plot" of family expectations (for

example the need for a family musician, a mathematician, a sportsman etc.)" (Davidson & Borthwick, 2002, p. 135).

5.5 Student perceptions of teachers

Congruence between student elective curriculum choice and teachers with whom a rapport had been developed appeared consistently throughout the three interview samples. Despite this congruence, whilst positive student-teacher relationships were necessary, they were insufficient motivating factors alone to influence student participation in the respective curriculum areas. Teachers were, however, frequently described as having a negative influence in elective curriculum choice with those teachers perceived to be less popular featuring in decisions not to participate in respective curriculum areas.

5.5.1 Students who had elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Individual student elective curriculum choices consistently correlated with those teachers nominated as those most enjoyed in Year Eight.

> INTERVIEWER: So you've chosen your Music teachers, your Computer teacher and Mrs Barton who comes to music concerts [as the teacher's most enjoyed in Year Eight]. Do you think when you were choosing your electives that had any influence?
>
> JENNY: Yep.
>
> . . .
>
> PAUL'S MOTHER: Unless you've got an extremely strong interest in the subject, if you're sort of at the point where you need something to spark it off, the teacher can make an enormous difference and I think that's evidenced in Paul.

> PAUL'S FATHER: My feeling is he's got support from Derek [instrumental music teacher] with the brass and the interest and variety have come from the School more than it has from home. ... So I think why he chose [elective music], to refer to the question, it's his own interest that's found support at school probably Derek would be the biggest.
>
> PAUL'S MOTHER: ... The confidence to continue and as Ron [Paul's father] says, that's definitely, that's come from the fostering that the various people involved, that Pete's been in touch with in the school.

The positive association between teachers perceived to be popular and elective curriculum choice was reported to be a secondary factor, with student intrinsic task values remaining a primary motivator. In David's case, he suggested that perceptions of a teacher served only to reinforce elective curriculum choices.

> DAVID: You've got to like the teacher too.

Mitchell's motivation to elect classroom music did not reflect any teacher influence suggesting, "The teacher was almost irrelevant".

> MITCHELL'S FATHER: I suppose if he had had a really bad experience with the music teacher ... it may have swung the balance.

While positive student perceptions of teachers were generally not influential in student decisions to elect curriculum areas, the role of teachers as negative influences was highlighted with Mitchell's decision not to elect French. He described teachers as important factors in the enjoyment or otherwise of a curriculum area and despite being encouraged to study French by his father and having demonstrated some ability in the subject, perceived difficulties with the student-teacher relationship in Year Eight provided Mitchell with a strong motivation not to continue with French.

> MITCHELL: I thought French was okay but I didn't get on with the teachers and that really turned me from liking French any more.

Mitchell's father suggested that negative perceptions of teachers would feature as a factor in Mitchell's elective curriculum choices generally and would not be limited to the decision to participate, or otherwise, in the French curriculum.

> MITCHELL'S FATHER: Languages, he was turned off by staff, because that's the way Mitchell is. He's very much a people person and if the, do you mind me saying this?
>
> INTERVIEWER: No not at all.
>
> MITCHELL'S FATHER: If the personal student-teacher relationship is poor you've lost him for the subject.
>
> INTERVIEWER: So it's a very strong factor?
>
> MITCHELL'S FATHER: For Mitchell, overwhelming.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Are there many teachers that he doesn't like?
>
> MITCHELL'S FATHER: No, I don't think a lot...
>
> INTERVIEWER: And he wouldn't choose a subject they were taking?
>
> MITCHELL'S FATHER: No, quite matter of fact.

The heightened influence of student perceptions of teachers on elective curriculum choice where teachers were perceived as a negative factor, featured in a number of parent perceptions of factors influencing enrolment behaviour.

> JENNY'S MOTHER: There have been situations where the personalities haven't been right and it just didn't work. It just didn't work, even though music's just coming out her ears all over the place yet if the personalities aren't right, that's Jenny. I mean, she responds well to a personality contact that's good, and if it's not good she'll just switch off and she won't learn a thing.

. . .

ANNIE'S MOTHER: I put it down to, a lot of the fact she had problems with Science in Prep School ... because of the quality of the teachers.

INTERVIEWER: So the teacher, in the case of Science, has been the difference between liking it and disliking it?

ANNIE'S MOTHER: Absolutely.

Students reinforced the role of a teacher as a factor in elective curriculum choice with the teacher perceived to either promote or diminish intrinsic task values for respective curriculum areas, a negative perception of a teacher being more likely to influence non-participation.

ANNIE: If you have a teacher who makes you like it and gives you a passion for it then you'll almost begin to like it and then if you like it and you like the teacher and you like the work they're doing you almost look forward to it. ... If you find you are with a teacher you don't like it sort of changes your whole outlook on the subject and that's also with subject choices. People think, "Oh I don't want to do Computing in case somebody takes it, this person takes it".

. . .

PAUL: If you have a teacher you don't like you just lose interest.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: You were thinking about Art ... how did you find them in Year Eight?

JENNY: Well Mr Jones, he was Jen's teacher and she hated him. So since Jen is a pretty good friend of mine. ... I think the teachers make a pretty big difference.

5.5.2 Students participating in instrumental or vocal music tuition who had not elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Tom suggested perceptions of teachers were only secondary considerations in elective curriculum decisions, with perceptions of a teacher being over-shadowed by the curriculum area itself.

> TOM: I think it mainly the subject in that one [Food Technology], but the teacher again.
>
> . . .
>
> TOM'S MOTHER: He liked Mr Stevens, thinks he's a great bloke, "But why would you teach Latin Mum? It's a dead subject.

When discussing the role of the teacher in influencing elective curriculum choice, Tom referred to the nature of the teaching style or learning activities rather than teacher personality traits.

> TOM: Well I think it has got a lot to do with the teacher because they make you learn their own special way and I like teachers that do a lot of practical things so I can learn.

While positive perceptions of a teacher were not sufficient motivating factors alone in Tom's elective curriculum decisions, a negative experience with a teacher in a co-curricular music activity had been significant in his decision to cease participating in a concert band, despite enjoying playing the saxophone.

> TOM: I stopped it so.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Because?
>
> TOM: I had a run in with the Training Band

INTERVIEWER: So had to leave the Training Band so you decided not to play sax anymore?

TOM: Yeah, but I'm hopefully going to busk over the holidays because I like it.

With a number of elective curriculum areas experiencing declining student enrolments in recent years there was some effort on the part of teachers to promote subjects during the elective choice process. While this had only a limited influence on student elective curriculum decisions, it was a consideration for some students.

SCOTT'S MOTHER: He was also very sensitive to the fact that a teacher had said, "Look if you're in the A1 stream you ought to be taking a language as a Nine and Ten elective". ... And so being only little and under the influence of teachers he thought perhaps he ought to consider Latin and French.

. . .

RAY'S MOTHER: He was actively pursued by the French department.

INTERVIEWER: Was he?

RAY'S MOTHER: Yes, she really wanted him to keep going with French

A positive teacher-student relationship served to enhance student motivation to participate in the teacher's respective curriculum area.

ANTHONY'S MOTHER: He was taking subjects like Geography and World History because of the staff. He definitely looked at those factors a bit too. ... They do have their favourite teachers and I think that's quite a big influence.

Scott's mother suggested that the development of a positive teacher-student relationship for Scott had occurred through his participation in a school rugby team.

SCOTT'S MOTHER: He chose Computing and in some sense perhaps influenced by Paul Croft being his rugby coach in the under fourteens and he generally got along well together and Brad Sands is Scotty's tutor. And so I think he obviously thought I know some of those teachers in these other

> forums so I think it was really a pragmatic thing. ... I have to say also with boys and sporty boys, it's not sport, rugby is shot through all of this like a plane. In other words Scotty's involvement with Paul Croft through rugby, Paul's with Anthony Howard through rugby, it's a player. It's an invisible player in boys if they're halfway sporty boys. It's the final arbiter of success.

The link between teachers Scott enjoyed and his elective curriculum choices was evident in both of his nominated curriculum areas. Scott's older brother had also reinforced the need to consider prospective teachers when deciding on preferred elective curriculum areas for Year Nine.

> SCOTT'S MOTHER: Paul only ever had Sally Jorgensen or Anthony Howard and said, "If you do World History you'll just have the best time with those teachers". And I think Scotty thought, "Well if I do Computing I'm likely to get Mr. Sands or Mr. Croft and I know them both well and they're good blokes and so that'll be great". So I think there really is a powerful element of knowing the teacher and how you like them.

Students maintained that the primary motivation for elective curriculum choices had been the intrinsic task values held for each curriculum area. The high level of congruence between intrinsic task values and preferred teachers was the result of the teacher's role in developing student intrinsic interest for the respective curriculum areas.

> RAY: History, we did a lot of re-enactments and that's why he kind of suited it. If we had a different teacher for re-enactments it would not have been as fun. ... Doing Music this year with Mr Mac was actually very good. It was actually really fun.

. . .

> INTERVIEWER: Do you think Paul [Latin teacher] had some bearing on choosing Latin as a Year Nine elective?

ANGUS' FATHER: Oh yeah, he enjoyed it and he knew he would be taught by Paul because nobody else teaches Latin.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: What are your favourite subjects?

SCOTT: For fun, it would be Art for sure because the teacher we have is very nice and I enjoy being creative.

INTERVIEWER: How big a part does the teacher play?

SCOTT: I think the teacher is very important. ... If the teacher is fun and can grasp the students' attention then I think it will be a very major step in learning because the students will pay attention and listen and take information in.

INTERVIEWER: So the teacher's teaching style, personality?

SCOTT: Their personality.

. . .

ANTHONY: Year Eight was a lot of fun because we had Mrs J., Mrs Jorgensen and that was a lot of fun.

INTERVIEWER: Who have you got as a teacher?

ANTHONY: Mr Howard and he's brilliant.

INTERVIEWER: So it's reached your expectation?

ANTHONY: Yeah exceeded it, it's brilliant. ... I love listening to music but all the theory work you have to do, it didn't interest me so much. It was more the classes with Mr McGreevy were so fun. ... I loved Music with Mr Mac ... it was an awful lot of fun, Music in Year Eight.

Anthony's intrinsic task values for instrumental music were closely related to the positive perceptions of his double bass teacher.

ANTHONY: Double bass was a lot of fun 'cause of the teacher I had.

INTERVIEWER: Who did you have?

ANTHONY: Nick Thompson. He left quite a few years ago now ... he was absolutely brilliant ... so I loved him as a teacher, he was absolutely brilliant. ... I learnt for two years with him and then I had Claudia Donnelly. She wasn't so wonderful but I really loved the deep sound [of the double bass].

. . .

INTERVIEWER: When did he give up the double bass?

ANTHONY'S MOTHER: End of year seven. He loved the strings.

ANTHONY'S FATHER: He had a fantastic teacher though, to start with. ... Because Nick would do yoyo tricks, he just made it more fun.

Conversely, a negative perception of an individual teacher was found to diminish intrinsic task values for each teacher's respective curriculum area.

INTERVIEWER: What has been your least favourite subject?

RAY: D&T

INTERVIEWER: Why?

RAY: Because of the teacher.

. . .

RAY'S MOTHER: It was like Geoff [curriculum Music teacher] couldn't relate to him in any way and Ray wasn't helping him. ... Music would have been a better subject [than French], had Music been there nurturing his love of music, but it didn't do that.

. . .

INTERVIEWER: And the least favourite was?

SCOTT: I think it was because it was the most boring, it would be RE or PE.

INTERVIEWER: Because of the material?

SCOTT: Because of the material in it, also the teachers, they were a pretty big influence because in RE it was very dull ... also in PE the teacher wasn't very interested.

5.5.3 Students with limited or no previous instrumental or vocal music tuition who had elected not to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum of Year Nine.

Consistent with findings reported from students with instrumental music experience, students with limited or no instrumental music experience described perceptions of teachers to be contributing factors and not primary determinants in a student's motivation to elect particular curriculum areas. Positive perceptions of a teacher served to strengthen existing student motivation to participate in respective elective curriculum areas.

> SOPHIE: I thought French would be good and I like Mrs Miles and Mrs Weston. ... So that sort of influences why you'd choose.
>
> INTERVIEWER: So enjoyment is the main reason?
>
> SOPHIE: Yep, and I really like the teacher as well.
>
> . . .
>
> BEN: I chose the ones I enjoy doing. The ones that I think have good teachers because some of the teachers I don't really like.

Ben suggested that student perceptions of teachers as a factor influencing elective curriculum participation were mediated by teachers' respective curriculum areas, as intrinsic task values were primary determinates of student motivation.

> INTERVIEWER: Have you ever had a teacher you enjoyed but not liked the subject much?
>
> BEN: No, but I've had it the other way around. I've enjoyed the subject but not the teacher.

The nature of the positive influence of student perceptions of individual teachers was related to the enhancement of student intrinsic values of interest and enjoyment. The teacher was described as creating the learning environment that promoted these intrinsic values.

> SOPHIE: Good teachers who get along with the students well. I had Mrs Jorgensen and she's just so much fun to be with, a good teacher, and it was interesting.
>
> INTERVIEWER: So the teacher plays a part in your enjoyment?
>
> SOPHIE: Yeah, I think so because you like going to class where you know the teacher is going to be fun and you know that you're going to get along.
>
> . . .
>
> ALEX: Some teachers like Mrs. Charles for example and Mr. McGreevy, they're young, all young and lively and they like what they're doing and make it interesting, they're enthusiastic about what they're doing.
>
> . . .
>
> INTERVIEWER: Why did you choose Art?
>
> ALLISON: Well I really like Mrs Charles as a teacher.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Is the teacher important in what you like, the subject you have chosen?
>
> ALLISON: Yeah ... I think they make it fun for you. They have to make you work but make it fun at the same time.
>
> . . .
>
> INTERVIEWER: What makes a fun subject?
>
> BEN: Good teachers. ... History and Geography, I enjoyed them because I had Miss Livingston, she's a good teacher.

The need to consider potential teachers when electing curriculum areas of study was encouraged by Allison's parents, as they perceived teachers to have a significant role in a student's experiences of the respective curriculum areas.

> ALLISON'S MOTHER: We knew that someone like Helen or Terri would encourage her so that would be a positive experience.

Despite a number of students holding positive perceptions of elective curriculum teachers, the influence of positive perceptions of the teacher was insufficient to motivate student participation in the respective elective curriculum area.

> INTERVIEWER: Would she take it if she really liked the teacher?
>
> SOPHIE'S MOTHER: Not necessarily ... it's a bonus if the teacher's really nice.
>
> . . .
>
> ALEX'S MOTHER: It [teacher] probably came into it but not strongly, not as much as his friends.
>
> . . .
>
> INTERVIEWER: Do you think Elizabeth was at all influenced, or could have been influenced by the teachers taking the subjects that she was considering for Year Nine?
>
> ELIZABETH'S MOTHER: No I don't.

Negative student perceptions of teachers, however, were influential factors in student decisions regarding elective curriculum participate.

> ALLISON: It's not that the words are hard, I mean I can learn the words and that's fine, I just don't think I fit with the teacher.
>
> . . .

ALLISON'S MOTHER: One of the reasons we steered her away [from Technics] was because of Warren [teacher].

ALLISON'S FATHER: The School also, by having some of the characters teach some of these subjects, are making those options not realistic options for a number of kids ... a lot of them [elective curriculum areas] were not real options because of the teachers.

. . .

SOPHIE'S MOTHER: If there was one [teacher] there that she really, really disliked she probably wouldn't take the subject.

. . .

SOPHIE: I think some people didn't like Mr Howard, didn't like the way he teached [sic], but that sort of influenced everyone. "Music, oh I'm not doing Music. I don't want to end up with Mr Howard".

. . .

BEN'S FATHER: I would have liked him to have done Art.

INTERVIEWER: And why didn't he want to do Art or French?

BEN'S FATHER: I don't know about the French. The Art he didn't like it.

BEN'S MOTHER: The teacher. ... Yes, that was definitely the reason. He said, "No. If I had her I'd hate it".

The influence of negative student perceptions of teachers on task participation was highlighted with student retention in instrumental music tuition. Where students changed teachers, a negative comparison between the current and previous teachers would result in diminished intrinsic motivation for instrumental music tuition.

ELIZABETH: I liked my first teacher but then she left. I didn't like my next teacher.

. . .

> ALLISON'S MOTHER: Sarah [Allison's sister] really enjoyed clarinet with Michael Poolman, but you see when he left she got David Arnold and that was it. I think with a musical instrument, that it is really important, you have to either like the teacher or highly respect their skill and ability. Something like that has got to be there.

Music teachers also featured in student decisions regarding participation in co-curricular music ensembles, with negative perceptions of the teacher over-riding positive intrinsic task values.

> ALLISON'S MOTHER: Sarah would have loved to do music and sport, she did cadets and orchestra until Dot gave her such a hard time about not going to music camp. That was the end of that.

. . .

> ALLISON: I really enjoyed some of the songs we did, I just didn't like Miss Darlington.

5.5.4 Summary of findings related to student perceptions of teachers as factors influencing curriculum choice

While a high level of congruence between students' perceptions of teachers and elective curriculum choice was found across all interviewed participants, positive perceptions of teachers were not reported to be primary determinants of student enrolment behaviours. Rather, positive perceptions of teachers were reported to enhance existing student motivation to participate in the respective curriculum areas. The nature of the positive influence was described through the teacher's role in establishing a learning environment that stimulated interest and promoted enjoyment, enhancing student intrinsic task values.

Negative perceptions of teachers were more influential as factors in student enrolment behaviour with those teachers perceived to be less popular featuring in decisions not to participate in respective curriculum areas.

Figure 5.3 illustrates the nature of student perceptions of teachers as factors influencing curriculum choice with positive perceptions enhancing intrinsic task values while negative perceptions of teachers contribute directly to student motivation to participate, over-riding positive intrinsic task values.

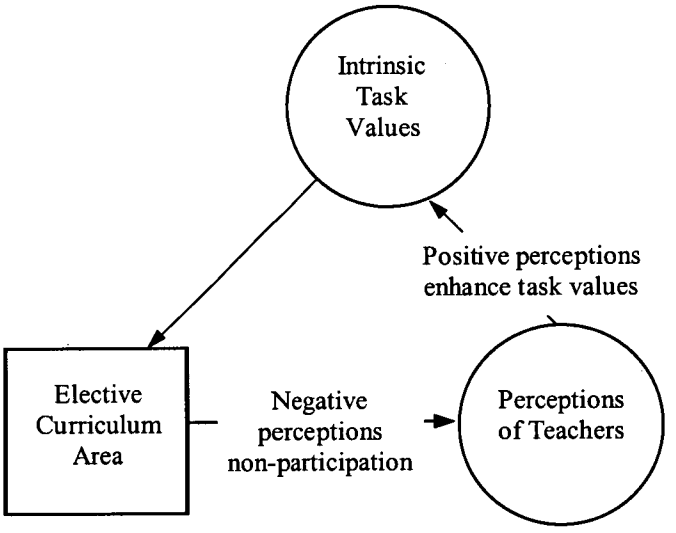

Figure 5.3: Student perceptions of teachers as factors in curriculum choice

5.6 Chapter summary

The analysis and discussion of data related to the contextual factors, presented in this chapter has contributed to an emerging portrait of student motivation as experienced by the Year Eight cohort. The motivational factors of task values, music self-concept and self-efficacy, and attribution theory, discussed in Chapter Four, were found to be embedded within a range of contextual factors.

The complexity of the multiple motivational criteria influencing student enrolment behaviour was highlighted by the range of rewards or consequences communicated to the students during the decision making process. These contextual interventions included parents offering task-contingent rewards, the balancing of personal interests and intrinsic motivations with the dominant cultural values of the individual's social group, and student perceptions of teachers enhancing or diminishing intrinsic task values according to positive or negative student perceptions.

Figure 5.4 summarises the complexity and nature of interactions between the contextual factors influencing elective curriculum choice. Figure 5.4 illustrates that while intrinsic task values remain primary factors in student motivation to participate in specific elective curriculum areas, the contextual elements of positive student perceptions of teachers and family values were found to enhance intrinsic motivation. Teachers contributed to the enhancement of intrinsic task values through the establishment of learning environments that stimulated interest and promoted enjoyment with negative perceptions of teachers undermining student intrinsic motivation. Family values were evident in both the development of student intrinsic task values, through the encouragement and provision of opportunities for task participation, and in the choice of school for their child's education. The type of school was found to be an indication of implicit family values for academic and sporting achievement. Where these family values were very high and student elective curriculum choices were not consistent with these values, parents would intervene through task contingent rewards to influence elective curriculum choice.

The promotion of a set of cultural values and beliefs through the school's reward system represented socialised expectations that cultivated peer group values

consistent with the school culture. The nature of peer group values served to either enhance student motivation through the satisfaction of both academic and social goals, or diminish motivation through potential social consequences for pursuing activities not consistent with the values of the dominant peer group.

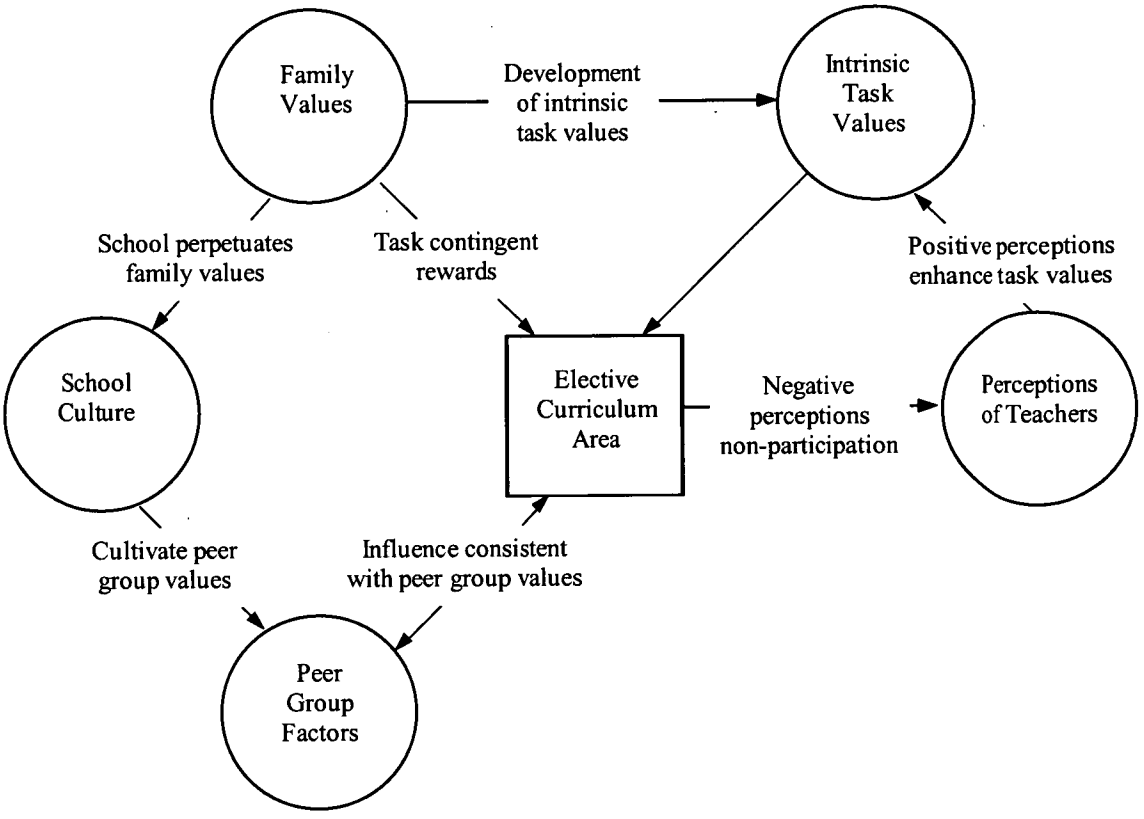

Figure 5.4: Interactions between the contextual factors as influencing factors in elective curriculum choice

In this chapter, data related to the contextual factors of school culture, peer group influences, family values, and student perceptions of teachers, were discussed according to the level of influence on student elective curriculum choice. The next chapter, Chapter Six, will draw on this analysis and discussion of contextual elements, together with the analysis and discussion of the key motivational factors provided in Chapter Four, to provide a summary of findings according to the aims of the study.

The implications of the findings are discussed and recommendations offered. Chapter Six concludes with some suggested future research directions.

Chapter Six

CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to identify and provide insight into the nature of the motivational and contextual factors that influenced student classroom music enrolment behaviour. This study specifically examined student and parent perceptions of the influences and motivations of students, average age thirteen years, when considering participation in the elective Year Nine music curriculum within the specific setting of a high fee paying independent coeducational Kindergarten to Year Twelve day and boarding school in a regional city of New South Wales. The data gathered throughout this project have been organised into two groups according to key motivational factors and contextual factors to provide an in-depth understanding of the range of factors that contribute to student motivation. In this chapter, the significance of this data in relation to the study's research questions, outlined in Chapter Two, is discussed and a summary of the findings is provided. Following the discussion of data relevant to each research question, Section 6.3 provides conclusions and presents recommendations. Section 6.4 outlines the limitations of the study and offers some future research directions with a brief summary of the study provided in Section 6.5.

6.2.1 Research Question: What factors influence student participation in the elective classroom music curriculum?

The many complexities of a student's motivational orientation, according to the multiple goals of social, personal and academic interests, created an additive model of motivation where the satisfaction of multiple goals optimised student motivation.

While intrinsic task values served as the primary determinant of student motivation, cognitive appraisals of competence, efficacy, attribution and a range of contextual factors were found to operate simultaneously, enhancing or diminishing the level of influence intrinsic task values had on student curriculum choice. For example, where a match between an individual's intrinsic task values and peer group values was not achieved, student motivation to pursue intrinsic task values was diminished.

High values for academic and sporting achievement, for the purpose of enhancing market value, underpinned the school's reward system and were found to cultivate peer group values consistent with salient school values. Where student intrinsic task values did not reflect the socialisation processes evident in the dominant values of the school culture and peer group, students reported the need to consider the social relevance of possible and preferred areas of engagement. This was particularly evident with a group of boys who had been participating in instrumental music and elected not to participate in the classroom music curriculum. Despite having demonstrated interest in, and a commitment to, music through private instrumental music tuition, this group of boys elected to cease participating in school music activities to maintain peer approval and membership of a social group that shared the dominant school cultural values of sport and academic achievement. This negative, and presumably unintended, consequence of the school reward system cultivated peer group values that diminished student motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum. The level of influence of peer group values was found to override positive parental influences for the elective classroom music curriculum, confirming the development of individual interests in adolescence to increasingly

reflect peer group values and gender-typical stereotypes (Renninger, 2000; Wigfield *et al.*, 1991).

The school culture's high value for academic achievement, according to normative comparisons between students, promoted a performance goal orientation. Where the school's performance goal orientation was not congruent with student mastery goals for classroom music, the co-curricular ensemble music program was identified as a means through which to satisfy mastery goals, as the school's performance goals were less salient in this context. Success in the co-curricular ensemble music program was typically defined according to the achievement of cooperative group goals where student rewards for attainment were common to all participants. The nature of attainment was reflected through positive parent and community feedback on performances in non-competitive environments and generally not relative to the other school or community ensembles. The presence of the co-curricular ensemble music program, therefore, diminished student motivation for the elective classroom music curriculum through means dissociation (Shah & Kruglanski, 2000). In addition to the effects of diminished student interest through incongruent student and school goals (Harackeiwicz & Elliot, 1998), the nature of the competitive school academic culture is likely to have acted as a constraint in the development of mastery goals that enhance student interest (Barron & Harackiewicz, 2000).

The varying levels of student task values for the classroom music curriculum was found to affect the meaning students held for competence feedback in classroom music tasks. This was evidenced by those students with high task values for classroom music being more concerned with the demonstration of musical proficiency than those

students with low task values for classroom music. The increased concern for the demonstration of musical competence heightened the importance of competence feedback, as feedback served to enhance or diminish student self-perceptions of musical ability. The relationship between task values and self-perceptions of ability, however, was found to be bi-directional as perceptions of competence were found to enhance intrinsic task values through the student's sense of mastery or efficacy, promoting enjoyment. The link between intrinsic task values and perceptions of competence is consistent with cognitive evaluation theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980) where intrinsic motivation is diminished when autonomy or competence is affected negatively. Conversely, positive perceptions of autonomy and competence enhance intrinsic motivation.

These findings suggest the nature of the task values determines which of the multiple goal hierarchies will be activated as the higher the intrinsic task values the less influential contextual elements become. This was evident with those students reporting very high levels of individual interest for music being able to moderate the impact of potentially negative contextual factors on motivation to participate in elective classroom music.

Parental influence on the development of task values was significant through the provision of opportunities and support for musical engagement and the role modelling of beliefs and values. Parental perceptions of the classroom music curriculum, however, were less positive as the curriculum was perceived to offer limited utility value, limiting positive parental influence to performance-based music experiences outside of the classroom music curriculum. The classroom music curriculum was also

perceived to lack relevance to future applications by a large proportion of the student population, further fostering disaffection with classroom music. The positive influence of utility value on decisions involving the elective music curriculum was limited to a small and highly motivated group of students who viewed music as a preferred career path or desirable life skill.

Parent regulation of student elective curriculum choice was found in cases where student motivation to participate in parent-preferred curriculum areas was low. Where parental interests, perceptions and values were strong and inconsistent with their child's task values, parents directed student elective curriculum choice through suggested goals, interventions or task contingent rewards. In addition to the consciously constructed reward contingencies offered by parents, student intrinsic task values were shaped by socially imposed reward contingencies in the form of school peer group values.

Data in this study have demonstrated student motivation to be differentiated according to contextual interventions that promoted salient cultural values. The differential relations between the various contributing motivational and contextual factors represent multiple pathways that students may follow, with concomitant differences in motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum. Tension between a student's multiple goals created hierarchies of complex relationships between contextual and motivational factors. Figure 6.1 brings together the influence of the motivational factors discussed in Chapter Four with the contextual factors discussed in Chapter Five to provide a rich map of the motivational theories and their

interaction, with contextual elements illustrating the patterns of music curriculum enrolment behaviour in this setting.

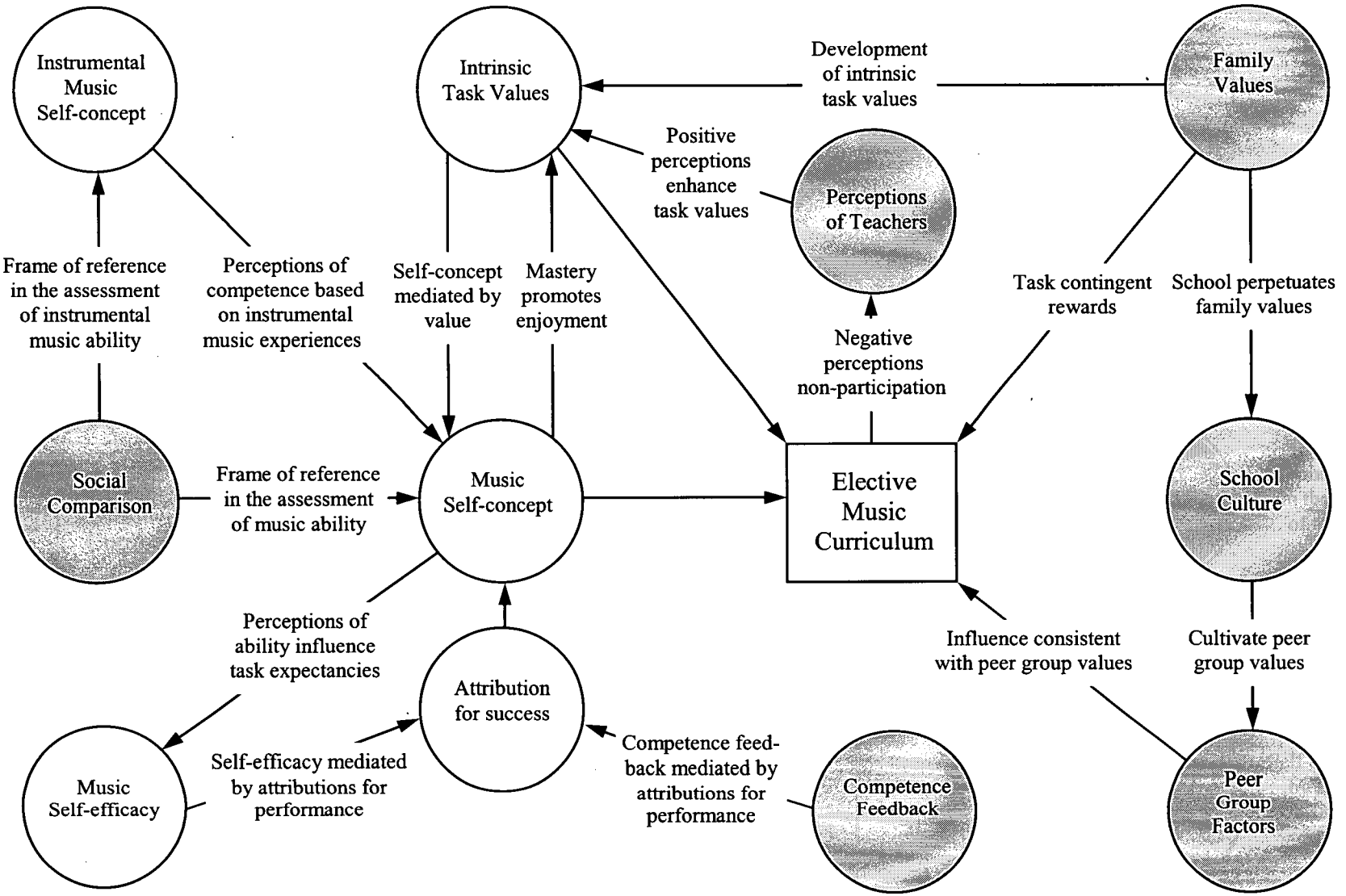

Figure 6.1: Map of motivational factors influencing enrolment behaviour

6.2.2 Research Question: What components of the compulsory classroom music curriculum contribute to student motivation to participate in the elective music curriculum?

With the level of individual interest having been identified as a primary motivator for sustained engagement (Renninger, 2000), the identification of curriculum elements that promote student interest and enjoyment offers the potential to develop student intrinsic task values for the classroom music curriculum through the development of interest enhancing strategies.

Practical music making activities were described as the most enjoyable and interesting elements of the non-elective classroom music curriculum with written tasks related to musical notation and characteristics of particular genres (including Rock Music and Music for Film and Television) identified as the least enjoyable by students who did not possess high utility task values for music. The nature of these intrinsically orientated task values of enjoyment are characterised by a positive student response in the moment and have been referred to as situational interest in the educational research literature. Situational interest "refers to elicited attention for content in the sense of enjoyment, curiosity, and so forth, but no assumption can be made about the level of content knowledge" (Renninger, 2000, p. 373).

In contrast, those students electing to participate in the classroom music curriculum demonstrated individual interest where task engagement was characterised by a motivation to satisfy longer-term musical goals. This group of students described learning tasks related to the attainment of musical knowledge and skills as those that

were of most interest. The link between student utility task values and interest in tasks that promote acquisition of knowledge and development of musical skills highlighted the role of individual goals in framing student interest. Differences in task values contributed to differences in levels of interest for particular learning experiences consistent with student perceptions of the purpose of task engagement.

The distinction between the types of interest is illustrated by the contrasting values of the practical music-making activities involving percussion instruments. Students with a short-term situational interest in music referred only to performance based activities "where you just make a lot of noise" (Sophie) as enjoyable, while those students with an individual interest in music perceived these types of activities as non-authentic as "it wasn't real music ... most of them were just improvising and it kind of didn't fit in" (Jenny). Elliott's (1995) distinction between spontaneous originality and creativity supports the different interest types, with spontaneous originality being a musical activity that occurs without musicianship and ignorant of the relevant criteria and traditions of the genre.

> Just because students bang pots and pans freely ... does not mean they are producing creative musical results. (Elliott, 1995, p. 221)

The nature of the learning experiences in the classroom music curriculum appeared not to match the elements of student individual interest for music as 83% of students participating in individual instrumental or vocal music tuition elected not to participate in the classroom music curriculum. The development of learning strategies that call attention to the authentic music making contexts of student individual

interest, namely the rehearsal and performance based activities experienced by students in the instrumental and vocal music tuition program, are likely to increase student engagement. Students would have the opportunity to make connections between individual interests in performance music to less developed interests in the classroom music curriculum. These connections enable students to bring a level of knowledge to the classroom music curriculum that enhances self-perceptions of competence and efficacy. The knowledge gained through non-classroom music experiences can provide a basis to ask questions and begin to establish challenges in a desire for mastery, increasing value for content knowledge, and individual interest (Renninger, 2000).

6.2.3 Research Question: What perceptions do students hold of their own abilities, attitudes and knowledge of music?

While a positive domain specific academic self-concept is a contributing determinant of intrinsic task values, promoting interest and a sense of efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Lepper & Henderlong, 2000), the findings from this study indicate that a positive music self-concept is a necessary, however, insufficient factor in student participation in the classroom music curriculum. This was illustrated with a group of instrumental music students reporting positive perceptions of musical competence and electing not to participate in the classroom music curriculum based on perceptions of the curriculum's limited utility value.

One explanation for the limited role of positive student perceptions of competence as a factor influencing elective curriculum choice was the high value placed on academic and sporting achievement within the broader school culture. The salient school values

appeared to create a weighting effect where students would appraise competence information according to school and peer group values. Where competence information was reported in an area that was valued by the school and peer group culture, competence information was influential in enhancing student motivation. Competence information in areas of less cultural value had less effect in motivating student behaviour.

The findings from the interview data provide evidence of the influence of frames of reference on the development of student music self-concepts. While self-enhancement theorists (Brown, 1990; Goethals, 1986) propose individuals seek favourable social comparisons, this study found students made social comparisons of musical ability with a small but relatively high achieving group of instrumental music students. This frame of reference produced unfavourable comparisons contributing to a diminished music self-concept, which in turn, diminished self-efficacy. Consistent with the *big-fish-little-pond-effect* (Marsh & Craven, 2000), changes in the frames of reference employed by students resulted in changes to student music self-concepts.

The use of social comparisons as determinants of musical ability is likely to have been enhanced by a school culture that promoted a performance goal orientation. While mastery goals orientate learners to strive to improve over time, performance goals orientate students to demonstrate high ability by out-performing others, promoting interest in competence assessment. Achievement-goal theorists (Butler, 1988; Rawsthrone & Elliott, 1999) have found performance goal settings undermine intrinsic task values and task persistence, relative to mastery goal settings, as students perceive the task as a means of demonstrating ability, in turn, evoking evaluation

anxiety. The nature of competitive, performance goal environments makes it impossible for all students to meet the performance goals of high achievement relative to peers. Success for some students must imply failure for others, limiting positive motivational effects to those students who achieve at high levels relative to peers.

Student perceptions of causal attributes for success are also related to efficacy beliefs, as students who perceive success to be caused by a stable attribute are likely to anticipate similar outcomes with repeated attempts in similar tasks in the future. For example, failure attributed to a lack of ability results in diminished expectancies of success in future related tasks. Attribution theorists (Austin & Vispoel, 1992; Legette, 1998; Weiner, 1990; 1985) acknowledge that while students use competence feedback as cues to appraise their own self-efficacy for continued learning, the influence of competence feedback on self-efficacy is modified by student attributions for performance. In this study, ability attributions featured prominently in student perceptions of causality for success in the classroom music curriculum, with ability on a musical instrument derived from social comparisons, reported as the primary influence on student expectancies for future task attainments. Student efficacy beliefs were also based on personal competence evaluations according to perceptions of task difficulty related to the elective classroom music curriculum.

6.3 Conclusions and recommendations

The following recommendations are based around an awareness of a wide range of interacting factors influencing student motivation and have implications for classroom practice and school culture. Caution needs to be exercised, however, when generalising about student motivation to participate in classroom music programs in

broader school contexts as the following recommendations are based on a range of contextual factors that are specific to this site. Rather, an understanding of this specific setting offers opportunities to 'transfer' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) findings to other school contexts where similar contextual factors are identified. The findings highlight the need for teachers and schools to be receptive to the wide range of contributing factors when developing strategies that are intended to promote student participation in the elective classroom music curriculum.

The differential goal orientations between students with a situational interest and an individual interest, illustrated the complexities of planning interest-enhancing strategies. Task embellishments intended to enhance interest for one student can potentially diminish interest for another. To cater for the contrasting interests, teachers need to create a flexible learning context where student autonomy and choice enables individual students to regulate interest in order to maintain or enhance motivation. Such learning contexts may promote opportunities for differentiated learning through the provision of a range of learning experiences.

While interest-enhancing strategies that promote individual interest are more likely to result in task persistence (Bergin, 1999), the enhancement of situational interest through positive environmental features may prove valuable in capturing student attention. For student attention to hold over time, however, situational interest needs to develop into individual interest (Hidi & Anderson, 1992).

This analysis found the school culture to emphasise success according to normative attainment based on external criteria.. The school's performance goal orientation

promoted social comparisons of ability as a determinant of domain specific academic self-concept, diminishing motivation to participate in the elective classroom music curriculum for those students who compared unfavourably with a small group of high achieving instrumental music students. The reporting of achievement that focuses on student grade levels promotes student behaviour towards achieving higher grades rather than a mastery of the curriculum (Kellaghan, Madaus & Raczek, 1996). This motivates the counterproductive behaviours of self-concept protection where students are likely to withdraw effort to guard themselves against unfavourable social comparisons. While schools remain widely entrenched in the practice of using rewards and grades as reporting mechanisms, teachers need to develop skills in using grades as informational tools that promote student autonomy, in turn augmenting student academic self-concept, efficacy and intrinsic task values.

The selection of goals and the nature of teacher feedback offer vehicles through which student motivation may be regulated. Cognitive evaluation theory (Deci & Ryan, 1980; 1985) suggests that competence feedback is only effective as a means of enhancing intrinsic motivation when the individual perceives a sense of autonomy with respect to the outcome. Accordingly, teacher feedback needs to communicate the possibility of learning academic content to all students with feedback concentrated on a student's specific behavioural input to a task. Students who identify the causal attribute for success to be largely a function of the process and who receive praise for personal levels of effort, create a system of meaning where performance is malleable and controllable (Lepper & Herderlong, 2000).

The promotion of a mastery goal orientation may contribute to a shift in student perceptions of competence as unfavourable comparisons with gifted music students become less salient. Specific strategies that enhance mastery-orientated task involvement from students include feedback that focuses on competence acquisition (Butler, 2000), constructive guidance (Butler, 1998) and task specific feedback (Butler, 1988). The degree to which the school emphasises success according to normative attainment, however, has implications for the effectiveness of mastery goal orientated classrooms. Goal congruence between the classroom and school context is needed to optimise student motivation. A school reward system that provides positive verbal feedback that is not typically expected and offers informational aspects to affirm competence promotes a mastery goal setting where task mastery and effort expenditure are rewarded equally with achievement. The design of a reward system must be sensitive to the student's initial task interest, as differences have been found with the use of tangible rewards, with rewards disrupting intrinsic motivation for students who are offered task contingent rewards in areas where intrinsic task values exist (Sansone & Harackiewicz, 2000).

A mediating factor in the effectiveness of competence information is the degree to which individual students value the classroom music curriculum. Students cognitively appraise competence feedback according to perceptions of task values. Competence feedback as a motivational strategy, therefore, may vary across individuals and according to the nature of the task. While learning tasks that provide opportunities to increase student perceptions of competence and confidence are likely to contribute significantly to the enhancement of student motivation, the need to design learning tasks that provide sufficient challenge remains important. Poorly designed learning

tasks that are insufficiently challenging can lead to boredom, while tasks that offer challenge beyond student ability will result in anxiety (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The challenge for teachers is in the design of tasks with varied levels of difficulty that allow all students to work at an appropriate level. Techniques including co-operative learning, technology and tutorial programs may provide essential classroom strategies in the enhancement of intrinsic task values.

The limit of two elective curriculum areas, together with parent perceptions of the classroom music curriculum offering limited utility value and academic rigour, served to heighten the influence of means dissociation in elective curriculum choice. The perception that the instrumental and vocal music tuition program and the co-curricular ensemble music program offer alternative means towards the satisfaction of student musical goals demonstrates a misunderstanding of the nature of the classroom music curriculum and the benefits of a classroom music education in students' lives generally. McPherson (2005) identifies similar community misunderstandings in the nature of the musical experience and calls for advocacy efforts to relate the goals of music education with those of education generally. Advocacy messages that support the existing perceptions of music's limited utility value by promoting the intrinsic task values of enjoyment and interest as the primary benefits of a music education are unlikely to contribute to changes in student classroom music enrolment behaviour. Strategies aimed at developing understandings of the nature of the classroom music curriculum and the associated benefits in education generally are needed. Such strategies need to highlight the inherent differences between the nature and benefits of the range of school music experiences available to minimise the effect of means dissociation.

The differentiated patterns of student motivation and multiple goals operating simultaneously, according to different salient contextual factors between students, places boundary conditions on the recommendations offered above. Further research is needed to explore the relationships between the various cognitive and contextual mediators in a range of school contexts, providing opportunities to extend and refine an understanding of student motivation.

6.4 Limitations of the study and directions for future research

The research is primarily limited by a focus on a set of motivational factors and selected contextual factors for a group of individual Year Eight students in an independent co-educational school in regional New South Wales. While the study of a single site qualifies the findings, the study of situation-specific cognitions and evaluations provided a clear context in which to interpret the data. The motivational theories and cognitive factors have been selected from a range of possible alternative representations of student enrolment behaviour, for which a justification is offered in Chapter Two.

My dual aim of constructing a full and thorough knowledge of the complexity and contextuality of student motivation within this specific school setting, presented methodological issues related to authenticity and transferability that need to be acknowledged and addressed in subsequent investigations. These issues have been previously identified in discussions relating to the role of the researcher, Section 3.5; methodological rigour, Section 3.10.1; and interpretive rigour, Section 3.10.2. Despite limitations related to a set of factors within a single site and methodological issues

related to authenticity and transferability, the data revealed a number of contrasting motivational orientations that offer several positive research directions.

To inform educational interventions designed to promote student participation in classroom music curricula, a more complete understanding of student motivation is required. To this end, future research needs to examine the interacting relationships between the various contextual and motivational factors to verify that the findings of this study can be sustained in broader school contexts. Investigations with larger and more diverse student samples across a range of age, gender, socio-cultural and socio-economic contexts may contribute to the development of a broader conceptual framework of student motivation to participate in school music curricula. In addition, the study of student self-perceptions, task values and attributions across the broader school curriculum in future research will enable the cognitive mediators of task values, music self-concept, self-efficacy and attribution to be compared across other academic domains.

The impact of educational interventions, as recommended in this study, requires research with a view to identifying the effects of specific interventions at individual, class and school levels. This includes an examination of specific intervention strategies and the effects according to student gender and identity within specific social and cultural contexts to identify any concomitant effects on student motivation.

The level of goal congruence between the classroom and the school mediates the effectiveness of mastery goals as an intervention strategy in the enhancement of student-self-efficacy (Maehr & Midgley, 1991). Future research is needed to explore

recent advances in collective efficacy (Goddard, Hoy & Hoy, 2004) as a factor in the development of organisational strategies that produce positive effects on student motivation. The emergence of collective efficacy as a group-level attribute for organisational goal attainment provides an "opportunity to understand organizational culture and its influence on participants and group outcomes in new ways that hold promise for deeper theoretical understanding and practical knowledge concerning the improved function of organised activity, particularly schooling" (Goddard, Hoy & Hoy, 2004). An understanding of collective efficacy, therefore, is important in informing organisational transformation strategies intended to enhance student motivation.

The findings of this study support Pajare and Miller's (1994) assertion that self-concept contributes to student motivation through its influence on self-efficacy. Unlike domain specific academic self-concept, self-efficacy is task specific. To gain a fuller understanding of student motivation to participate in a classroom music curriculum, future research needs to include a detailed study of student expectations of the specific music curriculum. While this study has explored student perceptions of the elective music curriculum as a factor influencing enrolment behaviour, it has not explored student perceptions of specific elements and expectations of learning tasks in the elective classroom music curriculum.

An important class of determinants, not included in this study are the affective constructs related to personality. Personality traits include individual differences in achievement orientations, mood, identity and self-in-relation to others. Self-referential bias has been demonstrated to have a motivational component (Marcus, 1980, cited in

Davidson, 1999) with individual differences having important implications for a variety of motivational processes (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Personality effects can occur independently of contextual factors and can promote a weighting effect on the value of competence feedback. For example, differences in student achievement orientations can produce differences in the effects of contextual factors as a student with high levels of achievement orientation is likely to perceive competence information less as an evaluative threat and more as a challenge (Harackiewicz & Sansone, 2000, p. 95). The nature of a student's goal orientation can determine approach or avoidance motivations. For example, students who have a performance goal orientation have a lot at stake when they are placed under evaluation. It is recommended that the expansion of affective constructs in future motivational research in music education also include cost and performance anxiety, two emerging factors identified within the interview data.

The high participation rates of students in the co-curricular ensemble music program, at a stage when classroom music curriculum participation is low, reflect a feature in student motivation in the middle years of schooling. Student motivation has been found to increase in non-academic areas while student motivation for academic areas decreases (Anderman & Maehr, 1994). This shift in student motivation occurs at a time when students move into secondary schooling. The competitive secondary school culture promotes performance goal orientations that have been reported to produce negative effects on student motivation (Eccles & Midgley, 1989). The literature related to the transition between primary and secondary education has not been fully considered in this study and offers important research directions in future studies where contextual factors are considered.

While many curriculum reform efforts in recent years have addressed the developmental needs of students moving through the transition stages of early high school, few curriculum reform efforts have addressed the motivational needs of early adolescent students. The need to achieve a good 'fit' between the needs of adolescents and their educational environment is important if student engagement and task persistence is to be enhanced. Research is needed that examines the nature of music curricula and specific classroom music strategies to identify effects on student motivation. The identification of specific strategies that enhance student music self-efficacy and individual interest offers significant practical and theoretical interest.

6.5 Summary

This study explored a range of factors found to be influential in student motivation to participate in the elective music curriculum at an independent coeducational school in regional New South Wales. The data analysis revealed a complex interplay between cognitive mediators of task values, self-concept, self-efficacy and student attribution with the broader social and cultural contexts of school culture, peer group values, family values and student perceptions of teachers. The inclusion of key motivational factors and contextual factors has provided a rich understanding of student motivation and the nature of the relationships between factors.

While patterns within the data have replicated findings in the motivational research, much of this research literature has been organised according to clusters rather than integrated across the different motivational and contextual factors (Bergin, 1999; Hidi, 2000; Murphy & Alexander, 2000). The current study provides a valuable

extension by employing an integrative framework thoroughly grounded in the motivational literature. This integrative framework has enabled the consideration of a range of factors found to operate simultaneously revealing interdependence between motivational and contextual factors.

Consistent with previous research (Sansone & Morgan, 1992), this study found student intrinsic motivation for school based activities decreases as students move from primary to secondary school, while intrinsic motivation for non-school based activities remains stable. The findings of this study reveal the influence of values held by the cultural milieu on student motivation, confirming the need for intervention strategies to focus on counteracting negative perceptions of the classroom music program. Strategies aimed at promoting broader cultural values would serve to diminish the negative mediating influence of the cultural milieu on positive student intrinsic task values for music.

While there exist numerous compelling arguments articulating the value and importance of music education for all students (http://www.isme.org/article/archive/26, retrieved June 23, 2005), music education in Australian secondary schools continues to experience low student participation rates. This study provides a valuable insight into the nature of the motivational and contextual factors at play within this specific setting and highlights that an understanding of student motivation to participate in the classroom music curriculum requires an understanding of the complexities of the relationships between the individual's multiple goal orientations. The success of future music curriculum reform efforts will depend on the ability of music educators and administrators to assume an

encompassing perspective that includes an understanding of both personal and contextual factors that shape student motivation. Strategies that are iterative and responsive to these dynamic motivational factors offer an enhanced likelihood of success.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Research Information Sheet:

Year Eight Students

UNIVERSITY
OF TASMANIA

Research information sheet
Investigating the Factors that Influence Student Elective Study in Junior Secondary School Music

17 August, 2000

Dear [*Student Name*]

I am currently studying towards a Doctor of Education degree through the University of Tasmania, where I am very interested in learning more about the factors that influence your choices when deciding on the elective subjects to study for Year Nine. I am specifically looking at student motivation to continue or discontinue studies in classroom music.

I would like to invite you to participate in this study. This will require your consent.

If you choose to participate, the study will involve you completing a written survey where you will be asked questions relating to personal music preferences, influences and motivations for selecting the two Year Nine elective subjects for 2001. You will also be asked to describe your abilities and experiences in music, including your thoughts on the music course in Year Seven and Year Eight. You may also be invited to participate in an interview, where you will be asked questions about your reasons for selecting the two elective courses you chose for Year Nine.

If you participate in an interview, your interview will be transcribed and returned to you so that you may check to ensure that the transcript is an accurate record of what was said during the interview. You are welcome to comment or change any part of the transcript that you think is not accurate.

All information collected during this study will remain strictly confidential and will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my office. At the end of this study all survey forms and interview transcripts will be stored in a locked filing cabinet at the University of Tasmania for a period of seven years. You will not be identified by name at any stage of the study's reporting and you will be provided a statement of informed consent for your records.

Participation in this study is purely voluntary and should you wish to withdraw from the study at any point you may do so without prejudice. Please note, that there will be no payment available for your participation.

This study has received ethical approval from the University of Tasmania's Ethics Committee and permission and approval from the school Headmaster, [*Headmaster's name*] and your parents. Should you have any concerns regarding this study please discuss them with your parents who can then contact the executive officer of the University Ethics Committee, Mr Chris Hooper, or the chief investigator: Dr Margaret Barrett, or I. Could I ask that the consent form be returned to me by Thursday, August 24.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mr Rob McEwan

APPENDIX B

Statement of Informed Consent:

Year Eight Students

UNIVERSITY
OF TASMANIA

Statement of informed consent for school participation in the research project
Investigating the factors that influence student elective study in junior secondary school music

Please read the following in conjunction with the attached 'Information Sheet'. Before participating in this investigation your signature is required as confirmation of your informed consent.

Statement of Informed Consent

I have read the information sheet attached and understand the aims, nature and possible effects of the study. I understand that there is no payment available for participation in this study. I also understand that the study will involve completing a survey form where questions will be asked relating to my personal music preferences, school music experiences and any factors that may have influenced my elective subject choices for Year Nine. In addition, I may be invited to participate in an interview where I may be asked questions relating to personal music preferences, influences, motivations for selecting two Year Nine elective subjects. I understand that should I be invited to participate in an interview, my parents may also be invited to discuss factors that relate to my elective choices, music preferences and school music experiences.

I understand that all data generated through this study will be treated as confidential and that I will not be identifiable in any publications that arise from this study. I understand data gathered through this study will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet in the office of Mr McEwan for a period of two years, after which all data will be sorted in a locked filing cabinet at the University of Tasmania for a period of seven years. I am able to discuss the study with Dr. Barrett or Mr. McEwan at any time during the study and I may withdraw at any time without prejudice.

I agree to participate in the research project and that any questions asked relating to this study have been answered to my satisfaction.

Name .....

Signature .....

Date .....

I have explained the research project and the implications associated and believe that the consent is informed and the participant understands the nature and implications of the study.

Name of Investigator: Robert McEwan

Signature ..... Date .....

APPENDIX C

Research Information Sheet:

Parents of Year Eight Students

UNIVERSITY
OF TASMANIA

Research information sheet
Investigating the Factors that Influence Student Elective Study in Junior Secondary School Music

3 August, 2000

Dear [*Parents' names*],

I am currently studying towards a Doctor of Education degree through the University of Tasmania, Launceston campus. As part of my study, I am investigating the factors that influence student's choice for the elective curriculum in Year Nine. I am specifically looking at student motivations to continue or discontinue studies in classroom music.

To enable an accurate investigation of the factors that influence elective choice, I am inviting all students in Year Eight to participate, as each child has recently chosen and commenced there elective studies for Year Nine. Accordingly, I would like to extend an invitation for your child, [*child's first name*], to participate in this investigation. This will require your consent.

The study will involve [*child's first name*] completing a written survey where [*he/she*] will be asked questions relating to personal music preferences, perceptions of personal music ability, experiences of the music course in Year Eight, and motivations that influences the selection of the two Year Nine elective subjects nominated for 2001. Your [*son/daughter*] may also be invited to participate in an interview, where [s/he] will be asked questions about your reasons for selecting the two elective courses you chose for Year Nine.

If your [son/daughter] accepts the invitation to participate in an interview, I would also like to invite you to discuss your thoughts regarding the music curriculum at the school and any influences and motivations that you feel influenced [child's first name]'s elective choice during the course of an interview.

All interview participants will receive a copy of the interview transcript so that it can be checked for accuracy. An opportunity to comment further or amend the transcripts will occur at this time.

All results from this investigation will remain strictly confidential with all information being stored securely off the school site. Your child will not be identified by name at any stage of the study's reporting and you will be provided with a statement of informed consent for your records.

Participation in this study is purely voluntary and should your [*son/daughter*] wish, [*he/she*] may withdraw from the study at any point without prejudice. Please note that there will be no remuneration available for participants.

This study has received ethical approval from the University of Tasmania's Ethics Committee and permission and approval from the school Headmaster, [*Headmaster's name*]. Should you have any ethical concerns regarding this study, please contact the executive officer of the University Ethics Committee, Mr Chris Hooper, telephone: 03 6226 2763.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this investigation, please contact the chief investigator: Dr Margaret Barrett, telephone: 03 6324 3248 or myself, telephone 6392 0341. Could I ask that the consent form be returned in the reply paid envelope by Thursday, 10 August.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mr Rob McEwan

APPENDIX D

Statement of Informed Consent:
Parents of Year Eight Students

UNIVERSITY
OF TASMANIA

Statement of informed consent for school participation in the research project
Investigating the factors that influence student elective study in junior secondary school music

Please read the following in conjunction with the attached 'Information Sheet'. Before participating in this investigation your signature is required as confirmation of your informed consent.

Statement of Informed Consent

We have read the information sheet attached and understand the aims, nature and possible effects of the study. We understand that there is no remuneration available for participation in this study. We also understand that the study will involve our [*son/daughter*] completing a survey form where questions will be asked relating to music preferences, school music experiences and influencing factors in Year Nine elective subject choices. In addition, [*Child's name*] may be invited to participate in an interview where questions may be asked relating to personal music preferences, influences, and motivations for selecting the two Year Nine elective subjects.

We understand that all data generated through this study will be treated as confidential and that our [*son/daughter*] and ourselves will not be identifiable in any publications that arise from this study. We understand data gathered through this study will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet in the office of Mr McEwan for a period of two years, after which all data will be stored in a locked filing cabinet at the University of Tasmania for a period of seven years. We are able to discuss the study with the investigators at any time during the study and we may withdraw at any time without prejudice.

We, the parents, agree for our [*son/daughter*] to participate in this research project and that any questions asked relating to this study have been answered to our satisfaction.

Name ..... Name .....

Signature ..... Signature .....

Date ..... Date .....

I have explained the research project and the implications associated and believe that the consent is informed and the participants understand the nature and implications of the study.

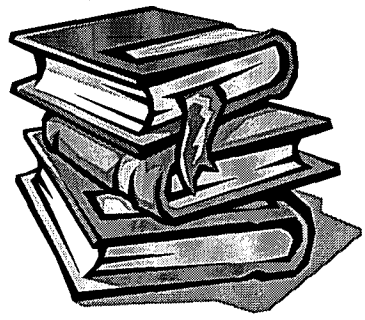
Name of Investigator: Robert McEwan

Signature ..... Date .....

APPENDIX E

Student Survey

Student Survey of Year Nine Elective Subjects



Please read the following instructions carefully before answering the questions below.

Please answer all questions in the space provided. If you run out of room please complete your answer on the back of the page using the appropriate question number next to your answer.

All answers will be treated confidentially and will therefore not be shown to any other teacher or student.

1. What subjects do you enjoy at school and why do you enjoy these subjects more than some of the others?

.....

.....

.....

.....

2. What school subjects do you think you are good at?

.....

b) Why do you think you are better at these subjects compared with the other subjects you study?

.....

.....

.....

3. Are there any subjects that you find difficult or that you think you are not very good at?

Yes No

If 'Yes' what subjects do you find difficult?

.....

4, Which two elective subjects did you choose for Year Nine?

1) ..... 2) .....

b) What were your reasons for choosing these two elective subjects?

Reason for choosing your first elective subject – .....

.....

Reason for choosing your second elective subject – .....

.....

5. Were there any other subjects you would like to have studies if you could have had more choices?

Yes No

If 'yes', what other subjects would you like to have studied in Year Nine?

.....

.....

6. Who are your favourite teachers this year in Year 8?

.....

.....

7. What do you think the school sees as important for the students?

.....

8. Why do you think the school sees this as being more important than other things that occur in the school?

.....

.....

.....

9. What are some of the elective subjects your friends are doing?

.....

10. Did your parents help you choose your elective subjects?

Yes No

If 'yes', which subjects did your parents think would be good to study?

.....

11. Why do you think your parents wanted you to study these subjects rather than some of the others available?

.....

.....

12. Does anyone on your family play a musical instrument?

Yes No

If 'yes', who and what instrument do they play?

Who? (ie. Mum, Dad, older brother, younger sister etc.)	What instrument do they play?

13. Do you listen to music at home? Yes No

If 'Yes', what type of music do you like listen to? You can give examples of bands, composers or a radio station that you like to listen to if you would like.

.....

14. What styles or types of music do your parents listen to? Give an example of a band or radio station if this helps.

.....

15. Have you ever had lessons on a musical instrument?

Yes No

If 'Yes', what instrument and how long did you take lessons for?

Instrument - ..... Number of years that you took lessons .....

If 'No', would you like to be able to play musical instrument?

Yes No

If 'Yes', what instrument would you play?

.....

16. Have you had the opportunity to play a musical instrument but chosen not to?

Yes No

17. Was there anything that you did not enjoy about Music in Year 8?

Yes No

If 'Yes' what did you dislike about Music in Year 8?

.....

.....

18. Was there anything that you enjoyed about Music in Year 8?

Yes No

If 'Yes', what did you enjoy about Music in Year 8?

.....

.....

If there are any comments you would like to make about how you chose your elective subjects or the way that the subjects were offered please feel free to write them in the space below.
OR
If you ran out of space when answering any questions, you may finish answering the question in the space provided below. Please write the number of the question next to your answer.

.....

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Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX F

Student Survey:

Summary of Responses to Question One

Survey Data Question 1

Survey No.	What subjects do you enjoy at school and why do you enjoy these subjects more than some of the others?
1	Music because I understand what is being said all of the time, even when others don't.
2	Computers cause it is not hard; PD because it is fun.
3	Computers because it is not hard
4	I enjoy English, art, French because the teachers are fun and good. I do pretty well in these subjects and so I enjoy them.
5	I enjoy World History and French because I understand them, the teachers are good and they are both fun.
6	Music, French, English because they aren't all straight forward like maths & science where everything is either right or wrong. I like the teachers.
7	History, it's interesting and I really like the teacher.
8	Agriculture because it's practical and I have an interest in it & PDHPE because I have a good teacher and it's easy to understand.
9	I enjoy art because I think of myself as creative and not bad at it and I love art, also English because I have a good teacher.
10	I like PE because it is different and you don't feel clostrophobic, also Miss [*teacher's name*] is very attractive.
11	PE is different from the other subjects so it is best.
12	I enjoy Technics because it is not as much sitting down and writing but more practical work or hands on work.
13	Sport – I like being active. I enjoy listening to modern music. Technics – I like hands on subjects.
14	Art because of the creative element. English in the same respect, World History – cause the teacher's pretty mad and Science – cause I am pretty good at it – it's my best subject.
15	French & PE. These subjects are very fun for me and I enjoy them more than other boring subjects.
16	Music, maths, science, because I enjoy learning them.
17	I enjoy art because it's fun and there are basically no boundaries. I don't really like technics because I feel uncomfortable in class, I hate maths and science because they're hard.
18	Art I like because I am good at it and I like my class and teacher. I like English, not so much my teacher but I usually feel comfortable, maths I feel uncomfortable because I'm bad at it. I really like my science teacher Mr Zahl. My geography class is good because my friends are in it and science has a friendly atmosphere.
19	Art, English & French. Because I am pretty good at most of them and I like being creative. Also all three are fun. Also I like PE because I like sport.
20	I like Art & English. I am good at art and English is fun.
21	Latin, Maths, Science because I have some ability in these. For latin I just happen to have a good class and it helps with my subjects like English.
22	Agriculture because I like farming and all that. Commerce – Because it is interesting and worth while.
23	Art because I can relax & know that I don't have to be finished something in time.
24	Food tec, because at the moment I would like to be a chef when I grow up. English, because it makes me think. Maths, because I'm doing well and understand at the moment.
25	Visual Arts because it's fun and I'm interested in it. Agriculture because I am interested in it.
26	French, Art, I just like them that's why I choose them as my electives. English – good teacher.
27	PD – because it's really interesting and fun. History – because it's interesting.
28	Technics AG – it's a bit of a bludge and it'll be benifitial for me in the futur.

29	Technics because its fun. English because its easy and I'm doing well in class.
30	Commerce because I like the content. RE:
31	Because it takes me back to yr 3 reading storys but I am learning.
32	Art, Maths, Computers (only with [*teacher's name*]) good teachers, I just think that way (maths) saw it's easyish & the ruler are loose.
33	I enjoy English, Food tech, Art, History, French. I enjoy English because I enjoy writing stories. I like Grammar, Literature. Food tech it interesting we get to cook. Art I like creative things. I like History because it's interesting to know about things in the past.
34	I enjoy the different classes or [of] the arts (French, art, music) for they are more creative and open my ideas for life and I like them, therefore they are more fun than the basic subjects. They are also a challenge.
35	Art – good teacher & it's fun & interesting; PDHPE – fun, interesting.
36	Commerce – My teacher makes it really interesting ie. tells stories that relate to the work etc.; French – it is different to other subjects because you are always learning something different.
37	Agriculture: I really like because that's the thing I want to be when I grow up.
38	I enjoy nothing at all. I hate school ok.
39	Computer Studies because it's a bludge with Miss [*teacher's name*] and all the other teachers work you so hard.
40	Commerce I like business and I have a good teacher. English, I like speaking, computing I like computers.
41	I enjoy English at school because I read a lot & always get high marks in writing assignments. I enjoy History as well (for same reason) and I enjoy maths (I think because my friends are in this class).
42	I like Maths because I can use my brain to think about the difficult question.
43	Sport (P.E) Because I like sport P.E. (soccer) more than others and I not very creative.
44	Food Technology – cooking comes easy to me. History – also comes easy to me – same as Agriculture.
45	Food tech, maths and Ag because I seem more interested in them than others.
46	I enjoy all my subjects because they are all different so that means I can get a break from different classes.
47	I enjoy art because it is more bludgy.
48	Technics – good teacher, fun, more prac lessons. English & Maths if I have a good teacher.
49	Latin – I like the teacher and I like learning it because it is very interesting/ World History – I find it fascinating.
50	I enjoy Metal Work the most because I think that im pretty good with my hands.
51	Maths because it's fun for me.
52	I enjoy computer studies because I like using computers.
53	Commerce – I enjoy commerce because I learn more stuff in that class that relates to what I need. Food Tech – we get to make food and I look after myself.
54	Latin – I chose to do it & my friends are in the class. Computing – it's easy, I chose to do it + my friends do it.
55	French and Computing Studies because I find them easier & the teachers are good to me.
56	Technics & Computing. Because it's more "hands on" than the other subjects.
57	English is good because I have a good teacher.
58	technics because I love it.
59	Music is enjoyable for me because I love music and making it. Computer Studies are also fairly enjoyable but not as much as I'd hoped.
60	Art – creative work, making things. Maths – find most work easy or understandable.
61	Music – sometimes fun; Maths – silly teacher; Art – I love craft.
62	Art, D&T, because I like Art and creative things.
63	I enjoy music and history because music is practical and fun and history is very interesting. I also like art because it's fun.

64	I enjoy Art, Maths & English & D&T because I like learning & feel like I learn a lot with these teachers.
65	History, geography, I enjoy them because they are easy for me to learn and I think I am fairly good at them.
66	French, D&T. These involve a lot of prac which is fun and involves more creativity.
67	Art I enjoy more 'cause I get to be creative and I'm good at science so I like that and music too.
68	English – lots of different elements much more interesting. History – interesting. Art Computing Studies – fun, Languages – interesting other subjects mostly boring.
69	Science – The ideas and concepts involved make me more interested in Science. History – I like learning about the past to understand why it is as it is today.
70	His/Geo – interesting and fun.
71	English, a nice teacher. P.E. I like sport & fitness, ART, like drawing.
72	English, I love experimenting with languages. Art allows me to be creative in my element.
73	I like French, music and English because we do fun things and still learn.
74	I enjoy Art, PE, French. Art because I just do, PE because we get to run around etc. French because I like the language.
75	I enjoy music because I have grown up with music. My dad is a music teacher and I love playing music.
76	French is interesting. English – I understand it easily. Art – I am creative. History – I like to learn about what happened in our pasts. Music – I am musical. RE – I am knowledgeable in this subject.
77	French because I find it interesting learning a new 'code' (language). Art – because I have a chance to be creative. English – I like writing.
78	I enjoy Agriculture and hands on subjects I also like learning about history.
79	Art, Geography, D&T, Science because we do fun things eg. Activities And you learn better when your having fun compared to just writing.
80	Visual Art, French, English, Music, D&T, Geography – I like all these probably because I'm good at them & who your teacher is helps.
81	Agriculture, Art, Technics, PE, Food Technology.
82	I enjoy art because I think I am ok at it. I don't like the teacher however I hope I don't have Miss [*teacher's name*] next year. PE because we do sport DT because we make things.

APPENDIX G

Student Survey: Summary of Student Responses to Question Two

Survey Data Question 2

Survey No.	What school subjects do you think you are good at?	Why do you think you are better at these subjects compared to the other subjects you study?
1	Maths Science History	because it comes easy to me
2	Art, English History	because I tend to like the teacher better and it is in some way easier for me to learn in those classes.
3	Maths Science & Art	Because I like these subjects and good marks come easier from these than others.
4	Visual Art, English	I enjoy these subjects because of the teachers, friends in classes & the way their taught. Not just straight notes & lectures.
5	Art, maths.	I feel more confident with these subjects.
6	none	I am better at subjects I enjoy because I remember things I have fun learning more easily.
7	[no response]	[no response]
8	English, History, Art, French, Music.	I enjoy them and feel comfortable because I can do them well. The teachers are also very good. I know more about RE than the teacher.
9	Music, French	I don't know, I just seem to enjoy these subjects the most.
10	Art, French, Maths.	Maths – I dunno; Art & French - because I like them & I generally work harder in them.
11	English, French, D&T, Science.	Better class environment to learn in, plus I love most of them – with the exception of science, science has always been my fave.
12	English, history, art, french;	I enjoy them more. The teachers make them interesting & provide (me with) food for thought.
13	English, Art, PE, Science (a bit).	Because they seem easier than other subjects and easier to learn. They are also very fun.
14	Science, English, History & Geography.	I enjoy them so I try harder.
15	Science, History, English, Music, Latin.	I have had past experiences with most of the subjects which helped me understand the harder concepts. I was interested more in these subjects and wanted to learn more.
16	Languages, English, Science, Art.	Because they are most fun and interesting and because I am naturally good at these subjects.
17	Science, Music, Maths.	I don't know!!!!!!!
18	English, Music.	I am good at English and I enjoy music.
19	History, geography.	Because I understand them easily and I enjoy them more than other subjects.
20	English, Art, Maths.	I love drawing & painting & I like learning about maths & I think I concentrate more in these subjects.
21	French, Latin, English, History.	Because I find languages interesting and English is good too I also find history interesting so I am pretty good at that too.
22	English, Art, History.	Because I find them easier than other subjects.
23	I don't know.	I like them more than others & they seem easier to as well.
24	Art, Maths English.	Probably because I enjoy these subjects or find them easy. Also the teacher has something to do with it.
25	Music, Computers, History, Maths.	I have been studying music for quite a while. I have great interest in Computers and history and like maths when I understand it.
26	all	because I'm good at everything I try.

27	English, Maths, PE.	I consider Maths & English more important than other classes & so I take them more seriously.
28	Maths & Computing.	I don't know.
29	Science, Computing Studies, French.	I like them & I seem to have a "knack" for them.
30	Latin English, Computing.	Because I actually listen or like the subjects.
31	Commerce, Maths, Art.	I am able to understand them and they often have fun things to do.
32	Science, Computers, RE.	Because I enjoy some and dislike others.
33	Maths or PE.	I enjoy them.
34	Metal Work.	because I find it interesting and I want to learn more about it.
35	Latin/English	Because I enjoy Latin and I don't mind English.
36	Technics, Maths.	I enjoy them and there just easier to understand.
37	Art, English, history.	Because the others are more complicated.
38	maths, English, art, science.	because I feel comfortable in class with the teacher and students plus I enjoy them.
39	Food Tech, Ag.	because I enjoy doing them than others
40	Maths and Ag.	because the classes are slower and explain things easier to you.
41	I think in Maths.	I chose Maths because I can understand it and it is much easier than other subjects because I can't understand those English words.
42	Maths, Computing study, PE, Geog.	Because in those subjects above I work hard and get the good results, but the other subjects I work hard but can't get the good result.
43	English.	Because I get high marks and I like them because they have average teachers.
44	I am fairly alright at all of them.	I said I was fairly alright at all I think that that statement is understandable don't you?
45	Maths, English, Science, RE, PDHPE, WH, Geog, Hist, Comp Stud.	I don't study any other subjects. I suppose im just brilliant!! I am a ledgend.
46	English, maths, Science, History, computer.	I am just better because I just am.
47	Agriculture, Technics.	I do lots of these sorts of things at home I like them.
48	Maths, French;	Maths is easier to understand, it is "black and white" French is also like this.
49	French, English, Maths.	I find them more interesting than other subjects and they are easier to understand.
50	Science, maths, World History.	they have set topics and are easy to revise and learn, the other subjects are more of a challenge but I enjoy them anyway.
51	English, History, Art.	English – Because I like the teachers. I like writing grammar and literature. History – I find it interesting. Art - I liker making things and drawing.
52	Maths, Science.	Because my brain simply works in that logical way. they have teacher explain it properly.
53	Commerce, RE, Science.	Because I enjoy learning them.
54	English, Science.	Because I enjoy it.
55	technics, AG.	because I come from a farm.
56	Maths, music.	Because I do well in exams
57	Maths.	because I do better in the tests
58	Visual Arts, Ag, English.	Because I am more interested in them compared to others and I get better results in them.

59	Geo, Food Tec, English.	I have trouble with science, I find it boring and have trouble understanding it. RE because its very boring and I find it a waste of time.
60	Science.	Because I find it easier to understand & I have a good teacher so its easier to understand.
61	Music, Geography/History, Ag, Commerce;	Because I have a kind of musical family and I enjoy the others alot.
62	Latin, Aust History, Maths, Science.	Because I have some ability in subjects.
63	Art.	I like Art so I wand to work well.
64	English, PDHPE & French.	because I am good at them so I try hard and make an effort sometimes more so than in other subjects. Also I like my teachers.
65	English & Art.	because they come naturally, my teachers are pretty good too & so are the people in my class.
66	Not really any.	I'm ok at Art because I feel comfortable in class and I have friends in my class. Art classes enable me to further express my opinions.
67	Music, English, maths.	because I enjoy these ones the most.
68	Maths & Science.	They are easier to learn as they come naturally to me.
69	Science, English, Maths.	Art – I rush. World History and Australian History I'm too subjective.
70	sport, technics.	I like these subjects so I'm more motivated. I like other subjects but I'm still not as good at them.
71	Technics, Computers, PE.	because I know a lot with computers already and technics is heaps of fun and I meet all the requirements and PE I'm good at sports and fit[ness].
72	Maths, PE.	Because I find them easier and I don't like doing lots of written work.
73	PE, English.	Because I find the work easier.
74	Art, Sciecne, PDHPE, W. History.	Art & W. History because I thought I liked them better so I chose them as electives, Science – I am in the highest class possible. PD – I like sport.
75	PE and Ag;	because I enjoy them and then I seem to try harder.
76	Maths, English.	because I know that I'll need knowledge in these areas in the future so therefore I try harder.
77	Maths, French, Music, Geography & English.	Because I work hardest at these & I like the teachers.
78	French, World History, English, Science, geography.	I enjoy them more, like the teachers, understand them.
79	English, Art, science, geography.	I enjoy them, I am good at writing. I am pretty artistic and I am just interested in those subjects.
80	maths, French, geog.	because I like them kind of.
81	don't understand jack crap.	because I relate to them easily. Things you like and relate to are fun and you learn more.
82	Music	I enjoy it more, and so, I have a greater motivation for this subject.

APPENDIX H

Student Survey:
Summary of Student Responses to
Question Three

Survey Data Question 3

Are there any subjects that you find difficult or that you are not very good at?		
Survey No.	**Yes/No**	**If 'Yes' what subjects do you find difficult?**
1	Yes	Latin & French
2	Yes	Latin, Science
3	Yes	Music
4	Yes	Maths, Latin
5	No	
6	Yes	Maths, Geography, Music & Science
7	Yes	Science, Latin
8	Yes	Maths, Latin, Science
9	Yes	Maths, Latin
10	No	
11	Yes	Maths, art, music, religion, geography
12	Yes	Science, PD
13	Yes	Languages
14	Yes	Maths (sometimes), DT (project)
15	Yes	French
16	Yes	Maths
17	No	
18	Yes	Science
19	No	
20	Yes	Latin
21	Yes	Science & D&T
22	Yes	Science, Maths, Geography
23	Yes	PD (not PE)
24	Yes	Sometimes Science (except out teacher explains it really well
25	No	
26	No	
27	No	
28	Yes	English
29	Yes	Maths
30	Yes	Music
31	No	
32	Yes	Maths, Music
33	Yes	English and science
34	Yes	history, math, English, science, computers, PD, RE, PE
35	Yes	Science
36	Yes	RE, Science
37	Yes	Maths, Science
38	Yes	all subjects have a difficult part
39	Yes	English History Science
40	Yes	English
41	Yes	English
42	Yes	Commerce
43	No	

44	Yes	I want to be good at maths but …
45	No	
46	Yes	RE (*teacher's name*)
47	No	
48	No	
49	No	
50	Yes	English, French
51	Yes	Maths, PE
52	Yes	PE
53	Yes	Maths
54	Yes	Maths
55	Yes	English
56	Yes	Science
57	No	
58	Yes	Science, Maths
59	Yes	Well Science but I'm actually in A2 so that's probably why
60	Yes	Music, English & RE
61	Yes	Science
62	Yes	Science, Maths
63	Yes	Computers, History, Geography, Maths
64	Yes	Science, Maths, Religion
65	Yes	Maths & RE
66	Yes	Technics, Maths, Science, RE
67	Yes	Computer Studies, Maths, History
68	Yes	World History
69	No	
70	Yes	Maths
71	Yes	English, Geography
72	Yes	Computing Studies
73	Yes	Science, Geography, Maths, English, PD, Technics, RE
74	Yes	English
75	Yes	Science & Maths (only because this year I have a really bad teacher
76	No	
77	Yes	RE, PD
78	No	
79	Sort of	French, Maths
80	Yes	science, English, French, maths, geog, re, pe, pd
81	Yes	science, maths
82	Yes	History, Geography & Science

APPENDIX I

Student Survey:

Summary of Responses to Question Four

Survey Data Question 4

Survey No.	Which two elective subjects did you choose for Year Nine?	What were your reasons for choosing these two elective subjects?
1	Technics	Because I like making things
	Commerce	Sounds fun and it's common knowledge
2	Art	fun, bit of a bludge, good at it – interesting
	World History	Hard but should be fun and interesting
3	Agriculture	because I go well at this and enjoy it
	Food Tech	because I go well at this and enjoy it
4	Visual Art	I love it – always have
	Commerce	it's a need in life
5	Art	because I really love doing art
	Food Tech	because I enjoy cooking as well
6	Agriculture	because I like to learn about the country and its hands on.
	Commerce	It will be helpful when I grow up
7	Art	because it's fun and I like being creative
	French	coz I think it's fun + it could come in handy when I'm older.
8	Art	I can express my creativity
	French	I can learn about the French culture as I want to go overseas.
9	Music	I love playing music & I'm doing 5th grade in both clarinet and piano
	French	I like the French language.
10	Art	Because I like being creative.
	French	I like the language and I want to go to France for a year (when I'm older)
11	Computers	It is a skill required for future plans eg. school certificate
	Commerce	need to know about money etc because I will use these skills later in life.
12	Art	I enjoy it & have some dude ideas
	French	I can't pick it up again & I would like to go to France on GAP
13	Food tec	because I enjoy cooking and things to do with that
	Commerce	Mum said it would be a good idea, I may be changing to Art.
14	Agriculture	Ag – background in rural areas, thought it may be easier with some knowledge.
	World History	Advice as a good subjects for wot O would like to do in the future (primary school teacher)
15	World History	I am interested in history and wanted to learn more. Family also said it was a good subject.
	Computing	To become more capable in this subject which would help my career choice.
16	Computing Studies	Because I was interested in this area, also would be fun.
	World History	Mum and Dad wanted me to do this also fairly interested.
17	Music	I've played music since I was six and I'm good at it.
	Computers	I'm sort of interested in computing and there will be a lot of computers in the future.
18	Commerce	Can get you along in life.
	Computing	Can get you along in life.
19	World History	Because I enjoy it the most out of my choices.
	Computing	I chose it because I believe it is necessary in the future.
20	Food Tech	Because want to learn how to cook etc.
	Art	I like drawing & I like Mrs Cochrane as a teacher.
21	Computing Studies	I want to have a job in internet marketing so I'd like to know more about computers.
	French	I like French and I usually go very well in French exams.

22	Art	because I like doing it & I think I'm good at it
	Commerce	Because I need it and it'll help me in the future.
23	Art	I love art & I am ok at it.
	Computing	I like computers & my friends are doing it.
24	Art	I love creative work and making things
	Computers	I find working on computers easy.
25	Music	I hope to use music in my career
	Computer Studies	I absolutely love using computers
26	Technics	because I like it
	Co Studies	because I enjoy it
27	Music	I play the guitar
	Computing	Computers are a huge part of modern life
28	Technics	I wanted to do it.
	Computing	I wanted to do it.
29	French	I enjoy it and it will be useful later on.
	Computing	Useful for a job & to learn how to use them better.
30	Latin	I like it useful for other subjects.
	Computing	needed for the future
31	Commerce	Learn a very large amount of relative [relevant] facts.
	Food Tech	I wish to follow up this subject for future importance.
32	Music	My parents thought I have a talent for music.
	Computers	Because I like computers.
33	Computers	enjoy computers
	Food Tech	enjoy eating
34	Metal Work	That's the sort of thing I enjoy doing
	Computers	My Dad told me to.
35	World History	I find it very interesting.
	Latin	I like doing it.
36	Technics	Prac lessons fun. I like making stuff
	Ag	Farming etc is interesting.
37	Computing	Because it sounded interesting and lots of people said it was good.
	Art	Because I love Art.
38	Art	because it is fun, relaxing, im good at it!!!
	Food T	It is fun, easy, I enjoy it.
39	Food Tech	because I enjoy cooking
	Agriculture	because I live on a farm so I am interested in what we learn.
40	Food Technology	cook a lot at home
	Agriculture	live on a farm
41	Music	I choosing Music because I like it and I was learning piano when I was young.
	Computers	I choosing computer because now everybody is know computer how any works. need to know to study computer. So I choosing it.
42	Computing Studies	because I think Computer is very important to the world. If you don't know how to use computer it's worse.
	Geog/Hist	Because I like geog/hist.
43	Music	I like music.
	Computing	I like computers.
44	Commerce	I wanted to learn about business.
	Computing	I thought I would need to learn about computers.
45	Comp Studies	Because it's the only good subject on the list.
	World History	because I need history to be a lawyer.
46	Computer	computers so I could improve my computer skills
	Technics	Technics because I like to play around.
47	Agriculture	Agriculture: I come from that environment and that's what I want to do when I grow up (a farmer)
	Technics	Technics: I like that sort of work.

48	Commerce	I think it will help me in the future.
	French	I like it and I find it fun & interesting.
49	Art	It is something I knew I would enjoy doing.
	French	I would always have a teacher I like and want to go to Europe.
50	World History	I enjoy the history and how people live in different times.
	French	I would like to be exposed to other countries and languages also a few of my friends did it.
51	Commerce	My parents thought they would be good and I will need these skills in the future.
	Food Tech	I thought it would be fun to do food tech and be good skill for the future.
52	Computer	Mum wouldn't let me do two creative thinking subjects & I reckon their interesting.
	Art	because I making stuff & I thought the classes would be good to look forward to & I'd have something to show for my work.
53	Commerce	Because businesses make money and learning it is fun.
	Computer Studies	Learning stuff about computers offers more career paths.
54	Technics	Because its fun.
	Computer	I think I would learn more and its useful.
55	Ag	I'll learn stuff for on the farm.
	Technics	I like making stuff.
56	Food Tech	I really like cooking.
	Computers	To learn about computers.
57	French	because I wanted to learn a foreign language and I enjoy it.
	Art	I like being creative.
58	Visual Arts	I like being creative & it's fun.
	Agriculture	I'm interested in Agriculture.
59	Food Tec	future, enjoyment
	Commerce	help me in my future
60	Art	I enjoy it.
	Food Tech	For the food.
61	Commerce	Commerce- -because I want to on my own business.
	Agriculture	I love the rural activity.
62	Latin	I have a good class and I like the language.
	Computer Studies	I feel that we will need computers in the future.
63	Art	I like Art.
	Computers	Mum made me.
64	Visual Arts	Because I enjoy being creative & getting to a rest from textbooks.
	French	I enjoyed it in Yrs 7 & 8 & thought it would be good to learn another language.
65	Art	I have always loved art, it helps me relax & express myself. A lot of friends are in my class.
	French	I want to go to France one day & it's good to know another language and it helps with English.
66	Art	It sounded fun and I have seen my Yr 11 cousin's art work.
	Technics	It sounded fun and was a last minute decision. (we need more choice)
67	Music	because I like music
	Computer	because I want to learn about computers.
68	World History	Thought that it might be interesting.
	French	Was promised a trip to France if I did it.
69	Art	Its fun, I like expressing myself, friends.
	World History	Rob was doing it and it sounded really interesting.
70	Music	I really like listening to modern music so I thought it would be good to learn more.
	Technics	I like making things and being creative.

71	Technics	because I thought it would be fun
	Computers	cause I like and know stuff bout computers
72	French	Parents wanted me to.
	Computing Studies	I think they are the future and good to use.
73	Technics	Because I wanted to use wood.
	Computing	Because I thought it would help me in life.
74	Visual Arts	I love art – I am good at it.
	W. History	I thought I might enjoy W. History.
75	Food Technology	because I have an interest in healthy eating
	Agriculture	because I come from an Agricultural family & last year I did it and it was fun.
76	Agriculture	I wanted to see what it was like. I hadn't done it before.
	Art	I enjoy doing art.
77	French	Like the languages & would be useful for travelling.
	Music	I find it interesting & like the teacher.
78	World History	I really history, like the teacher and have been influenced by the history of England.
	French	I love French, the teacher, it will be interesting.
79	French	French because I felt like learning a language and had done a bit in my old school.
	Art	Because I enjoy art and am interested in photography which we will be doing in a following term.
80	French	Because I liked it in previous years.
	Computers	because the other electives I wanted to do were on the same line as French.
81	Food Tech	because I like cooking
	Computers	computers because I need to use one.
82	Music	I love music and am going to do it as a career.
	Computers	It's good to be able to use technology to your advantage.

APPENDIX J

Student Survey:

Summary of Responses for Question Four

Grouped According to Curriculum Areas

Survey Data Question 4: Summary of responses for question four grouped according to curriculum areas

Elective Subject	What were your reasons for choosing these two elective subjects?
Agriculture	Farming etc is interesting.
	I'll learn stuff for on the farm.
	because I go well at this and enjoy it
	because I like to learn about the country and its hands on.
	Ag – background in rural areas, thought it may be easier with some knowledge.
	because I live on a farm so I am interested in what we learn.
	live on a farm
	Agriculture: I come from that environment and that's what I want to do when I grow up.
	I'm interested in Agriculture.
	I love the rural activity.
	because I come from an Agricultural family & last year I did it and it was fun.
	I wanted to see what it was like. I hadn't done it before.
Art	fun, bit of a bludge, good at it – interesting
	because I really love doing art
	because it's fun and I like being creative
	I can express my creativity
	Because I like being creative.
	I enjoy it & have some dude ideas
	I like drawing & I like Mrs Cochrane as a teacher.
	because I like doing it & I think I'm good at it
	I love art & I am ok at it.
	I love creative work and making things
	Because I love Art.
	because it is fun, relaxing, im good at it!!!
	It is something I knew I would enjoy doing.
	because I making stuff & I thought the classes would be good to look forward to & I'd have something to show for my work.
	I like being creative.
	I enjoy it.
	I like Art.
	I have always loved art, it helps me relax & express myself. A lot of friends are in my class.
	It sounded fun and I have seen my Yr 11 cousin's art work.
	Its fun, I like expressing myself, friends.
	I enjoy doing art.
	Because I enjoy art and am interested in photography which we will be doing in a following term.
	I love it – always have
	I like being creative & it's fun.
	Because I enjoy being creative & getting to a rest from textbooks.
	I love art – I am good at it.
Commerce	Sounds fun and it's common knowledge
	it's a need in life
	It will be helpful when I grow up
	need to know about money etc because I will use these skills later in life.
	Mum said it would be a good idea, I may be changing to Art.
	Can get you along in life.
	Because I need it and it'll help me in the future.
	Learn a very large amount of relative [relevant] facts.
	I wanted to learn about business.

	I think it will help me in the future.
	My parents thought they would be good and I will need these skills in the future.
	Because businesses make money and learning it is fun.
	help me in my future
	Commerce- -because I want to on my own business.
Computer Studies	Because it's the only good subject on the list.
	computers so I could improve my computer skills
	Mum wouldn't let me do two creative thinking subjects & I reckon their interesting.
	I think I would learn more and its useful.
	because I enjoy it
	I absolutely love using computers
	Learning stuff about computers offers more career paths.
	I feel that we will need computers in the future.
	because I want to learn about computers.
	It is a skill required for future plans eg. school certificate
	I'm sort of interested in computing and there will be a lot of computers in the future.
	I find working on computers easy.
	Because I like computers.
	enjoy computers
	My Dad told me to.
	I choosing computer because now everybody is know computer how any works. need to know to study computer. So I choosing it.
	To learn about computers.
	Mum made me.
	cause I like and know stuff bout computers
	because the other electives I wanted to do were on the same line as French.
	computers because I need to use one.
	It's good to be able to use technology to your advantage.
	To become more capable in this subject which would help my career choice.
	I chose it because I believe it is necessary in the future.
	I like computers & my friends are doing it.
	Computers are a huge part of modern life
	I wanted to do it.
	needed for the future
	Because it sounded interesting and lots of people said it was good.
	Because I thought it would help me in life.
	Because I was interested in this area, also would be fun.
	Can get you along in life.
	I want to have a job in internet marketing so I'd like to know more about computers.
	Useful for a job & to learn how to use them better.
	because I think Computer is very important to the world. If you don't know how to use computer it's worse.
	I think computers are cool.
	I thought I would need to learn about computers.
	I think they are the future and good to use.
Food Technology	because I enjoy cooking and things to do with that
	future, enjoyment
	because I go well at this and enjoy it
	because I enjoy cooking as well
	Because want to learn how to cook etc.
	I wish to follow up this subject for future importance.
	I thought it would be fun to do food tech and be good skill for the future.
	I really like cooking.
	For the food.
	because I like cooking
	enjoy eating
	It is fun, easy, I enjoy it.

	because I enjoy cooking
	cook a lot at home
	because I have an interest in healthy eating
French	coz I think it's fun + it could come in handy when I'm older.
	I can learn about the French culture as I want to go overseas.
	I like the French language.
	I like the language and I want to go to France for a year (when I'm older)
	I can't pick it up again & I would like to go to France on GAP
	I like French and I usually go very well in Frecnh exams.
	I enjoy it and it will be useful later on.
	I like it and I find it fun & interesting.
	I would always have a teacher I like and want to go to Europe.
	I would like to be exposed to other countries and languages also a few of my friends did it.
	because I wanted to learn a foreign language and I enjoy it.
	I enjoyed it in Yrs 7 & 8 & thought it would be good to learn another language.
	I want to go to France one day & it's good to know another language and it helps with English.
	Was promised a trip to France if I did it.
	Parents wanted me to.
	Like the languages & would be useful for travelling.
	I love French, the teacher, it will be interesting.
	French because I felt like learning a language and had done a bit in my old school.
	Because I liked it in previous years.
Australian Geography/ History	Because I like geog/hist.
Latin	I like it useful for other subjects.
	I like doing it.
	I have a good class and I like the language.
Music	I love playing music & I'm doing 5th grade in both clarinet and piano
	I've played music since I was six and I'm good at it.
	I hope to use music in my career
	I play the guitar
	My parents thought I have a talent for music.
	I choosing Music because I like it and I was learning piano when I was young.
	because I like music
	I really like listening to modern music so I thought it would be good to learn more.
	I find it interesting & like the teacher.
	I love music and am going to do it as a career.
Technics	Because I like making things
	because I like it
	I wanted to do it.
	That's the sort of thing I enjoy doing
	Prac lessons fun. I like making stuff
	Technics because I like to play around.
	Technics: I like that sort of work.
	Because its fun.
	I like making stuff.
	It sounded fun and was a last minute decision. (we need more choice)
	I like making things and being creative.
	Because I thought it would be fun
	Because I wanted to use wood.

World History	I thought I might enjoy W. History.
	Hard but should be fun and interesting
	Advice as a good subjects for what I would like to do in the future
	I am interested in history and wanted to learn more. Family also said it was a good subject.
	Mum and Dad wanted me to do this also fairly interested.
	Because I enjoy it the most out of my choices.
	I find it very interesting.
	I like History.
	Because I need history to be a lawyer.
	I enjoy the history and how people live in different times.
	Thought that it might be interesting.
	Rob was doing it and it sounded really interesting.
	I really history, like the teacher and have been influenced by the history of England.

APPENDIX K

Student Interview Schedule: Interview questions grouped according to motivational categories

Student Interview Schedule

Content Categories	Student Interview Questions
Opening questions designed to gather non-threatening data and serve as a point of departure.	What elective subjects are you doing in Year Nine? Were there any other subjects that you would like to have done but could not fit in? (What were they?) Why would you like to have studied these subjects? Did anyone help you decide which elective subjects to pick? (Who?) What subjects did they think would be good to choose or at least consider? Why do you think they suggested these subjects?
Expectancies for success	Which subjects do you think you were good at in Years Seven and Eight? What were some of the subjects that you found difficult in Years Seven and Eight? Do you think you were good at classroom music? (Why?) What do you think it takes to be good at classroom music? (*effort, ability, luck*) (Why?)
Task values	Do you have any ideas about what career you would like to follow when you finish school? (What? Why?) What skills or subjects are important in this career? How would you describe music in Years Seven and Eight? (Why?) Which year did you enjoy more in music? Year Seven or Eight? (Why do you think this year was better?) What were some of the things that you liked about music, was there anything you enjoyed? Were there any activities that you did not like about music in Year Seven or Eight? What did you think would be included in the Year Nine elective music course?

Motivation and cognition (contextual factors) **Teacher**	Which teachers did you enjoy most in Year Eight? Why do you like these particular teachers? *If the same teacher(s) as elective subject area*: Did this teacher help you decide to choose this subject? *If not a teacher of one of the elected subjects for Year Nine*: Were you tempted to choose *(subject)* so that you could stay in their class for Year Nine? Were there any classes where the teacher motivated you to work harder and encouraged you to do your best? (Which classes and teachers?) How did the teacher motivate you?
Peer Group	Who were some of your good friends in Year Eight? Do you know what elective subjects they have chosen for Year Nine? Why do you think some of your friends chose their subjects? Do you think any of your friends chose their subjects together? Did your friends help you make your decision? (How?) Do any of your friends play a musical instrument?
School Culture	This school has a wide range of activities available for the students. Do you think the school sees some of these activities as being more important than some of the other activities that are available? (What? Why?) Do you think these same things are important? (If no: What do you think is important and why?)
Family values	Have you ever taken lessons on a musical instrument? (If yes: what and how long?) If you could play any instrument you wanted, what would you play? (Why?) What types of music do you like listening to? What types of music do your parents listen to? What types of music do you think would be good to study as part of the Year Eight music course?

APPENDIX L

Sample Student Interview: Angus

Purposive sample two:
Instrumental music student who elected not to participate in the classroom curriculum of Year Nine

Student Interview: Angus

INTERVIEWER: What elective subjects did you choose for Year Nine?

ANGUS: Latin and World History.

INTERVIEWER: Now how did you make that decision?

ANGUS: Well with World History I had an interest. I just like history and with Latin, I like Latin as well. But with World History I wasn't going to choose because I wanted to do Art but that was on the same line as Latin so I couldn't do it, so I did World History instead.

INTERVIEWER: So if you were allowed to do another elective subject would that have been your extra elective?

ANGUS: Yeah, it probably would have been Art.

INTERVIEWER: Was it difficult to choose if you've got two on the same line? That was Art and?

ANGUS: Latin was on the same line.

INTERVIEWER: How come Latin won out?

ANGUS: I don't know. I just prefer Latin I guess to Art. Latin is one of my favourite subjects, so yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me about Latin. With Latin is it because you want to use it for something or you just love it.

ANGUS: Love it. Well it's like a bit of everything. It's like history, it's about the language and you can use it. If you don't know the meaning of some word in the English language you can use your knowledge of Latin to work it out. It's just useful and interesting I think.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know which direction you want to go when you finish school?

ANGUS: Yep, I want to be an architect.

INTERVIEWER: So Latin?

ANGUS: There's not really a connection.

INTERVIEWER: No there's not a connection is there?

ANGUS: I just like Latin.

INTERVIEWER: It fits in with the History though, you like history.

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: You did Latin the last couple of years, so you enjoyed that?

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: And you knew the teacher would be the same?

ANGUS: Yep.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that the subject choice, for you, was determined by what you really like doing and, or the teacher that you had, the way it was taught?

ANGUS: No, I just think it was what I liked doing really. I don't think the teacher would really bother me.

INTERVIEWER: History the same?

ANGUS: Yep, with World History I just chose that because it was my next option after Art and I find that interesting.

INTERVIEWER: Have you had good history teachers before?

ANGUS: Yeah, none that bothered me or anything.

INTERVIEWER: So it's the history subject material that appeals to you most?

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Is it working out like you expected?

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: What instruments do you play?

ANGUS: I play the guitar and I used to play the piano.

INTERVIEWER: And you enjoy the guitar?

ANGUS: Yep, I enjoy the guitar.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that your subject choices are at all determined by what your friends chose?

ANGUS: No, not really, they are just what I wanted to do probably. Because some of the subjects I've got don't have my best friends in them, so it doesn't really bother me.

INTERVIEWER: When you were choosing the subjects did you talk to your friends about what you were choosing?

ANGUS: Yep. I talked with them.

INTERVIEWER: And they did the same?

ANGUS: Yeah, talk back to me.
INTERVIEWER: But it didn't determine how you chose?

ANGUS: No it didn't really determine, it's just what I find interesting.

INTERVIEWER: It sounds you like have very clear choices and you know where you are going, do your friends do the same thing or do they group together in groups? How do other people choose?

ANGUS: Well some of them, because with some subjects like Computer Studies there's like two different classes and so they sort of choose to go in the same class together. But they usually choose on what they like before they take friends into account.

INTERVIEWER: The friends are a secondary thing?

ANGUS: Yeah I think so. That's the impression I get.

INTERVIEWER: Who was your teacher for History?

ANGUS: Mr. Hamilton.

INTERVIEWER: And you enjoyed it?

ANGUS: Yeah, it's pretty good.

INTERVIEWER: He likes his history?

ANGUS: Yep, he does he's pretty enthusiastic.

INTERVIEWER: Which doesn't hurt.

ANGUS: No not at all.

INTERVIEWER: All right, from a music point of view, you've done music and you've got a bit of an understanding of musical instruments. Music in Year Seven and Year Eight, how did you find it?

ANGUS: Well I enjoyed the stuff but like everybody seems to just muck around every now and then. It's sort of like with music it's one of the subjects that when it comes to exams it is not heavily studied in Year Eight and Seven. Yeah I enjoyed it, it was sort of a bludge. Some people study it but the majority of people; yeah it's a bludge subject.

INTERVIEWER: They are there because they have to be there.

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Did you have different teachers in Year Seven and Year Eight?

ANGUS: Yeah I had Mr. Harrison in Year Seven and Mr. Mountford in Year Eight.

INTERVIEWER: And you never thought about doing Music as a subject?

ANGUS: Yeah I did think about it actually, if I could have a third or a fourth one I would do Music, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: But the other ones were more special.

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: I was interested when you said you were interested in doing architecture, you are probably one of the most definite people I've talked to about what they want to do. Most people in Year Eight don't have much of an idea. But you didn't choose anything like Technics, or anything like that?

ANGUS: No, well I don't really like wood working things. I'm not really good at handy sorts of things. There's a subject like Technical Drawing, but nobody, even if I did want to do that, which I don't think I did anyway, but if I did, there's too much math's involved. You need five people at least to do a subject and there was only, I think, one other person that I know of that wanted to do it but couldn't do it because there was not enough people in the class.

INTERVIEWER: So they ended up with no Technical Drawing class?

ANGUS: No. They had to cancel Technical Drawing and World Geography one other one, oh maybe it was just those two.

INTERVIEWER: And Technics is different isn't it?

ANGUS: Yeah, Technics is woodworking and stuff.

INTERVIEWER: I don't really understand it. So that would actually help you with what you wanted to do. So the choice of subjects was what was really enjoyable at the time?

ANGUS: Yeah, what I find interesting.

INTERVIEWER: Keep you stimulated, not necessarily what was easy though, you haven't chosen easy subjects.

ANGUS: With World History you get a fair bit of work.

INTERVIEWER: And Latin?

ANGUS: Yeah, and Latin you get a fair bit too. I didn't really think of that.

INTERVIEWER: What you enjoy is the main thing?

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: How much did your Mum and Dad play, what part did they play in helping you choose the subjects?

ANGUS: Oh they helped a bit. If I wanted to do say, Ag. which I don't really like.

INTERVIEWER: They'd say skip it.

ANGUS: Yeah, they'd say that. They were mainly fine with what I wanted to do really. They didn't have a great deal of input. They said, "Yep those subjects are good".

INTERVIEWER: And you knew where you wanted to go, worked it out yourself pretty much.

ANGUS: Yeah, just had a bit of a talk over and stuff with them.

INTERVIEWER: When you had to limit it down to two rather than.

ANGUS: Yeah, because I thought we were going to have three because my sister had three.

INTERVIEWER: Makes it really difficult doesn't it when you have to limit it to two and they're all in the same line, the ones you want.

ANGUS: Yeah, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: What about the music influence in the family. I don't know what your Mum and Dad and everyone else in the family have a musical, how does it work in the family? What style of music do your Mum and Dad like?

ANGUS: They'll just listen to classical music and some sort of music from their time, you know the 60s.

INTERVIEWER: But they don't mind what you listen to.

ANGUS: No, Dad quite likes it actually, what I listen to.

INTERVIEWER: What do you listen to?

ANGUS: The usual sort of stuff.

INTERVIEWER: Modern stuff?

ANGUS: Yeah, rock 'n' roll sort of.

INTERVIEWER: Radio?

ANGUS: Probably not the real hard rock, just the normal.

INTERVIEWER: The good stuff to listen to.

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: With your musical instruments you played piano but you don't now?

ANGUS: No.

INTERVIEWER: So you're just playing?

ANGUS: I started guitar at the beginning of Year Eight.

INTERVIEWER: And are you enjoying it?

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: And you're learning at school?

ANGUS: Yeah, I'm leaning from Mr. Ireland who works here.

INTERVIEWER: Do you do exams or anything in that?

ANGUS: I never did exams for piano but I'm thinking of doing exams for guitar. Apparently it's useful.

INTERVIEWER: Is it useful?

ANGUS: Yeah, he said that with university, if they see you've gone through them, you've done extra that might help.

INTERVIEWER: Do you have any trouble practicing?

ANGUS: No, I just usually have a bit of a fiddle with it about once a day usually.

INTERVIEWER: The guitar, does that mean you are in many music groups at school?

ANGUS: No, with the guitar you can only really go to the Training Band and that's sort of it and at the moment I am doing cadets and as much as I hate cadets, I just can't stand it, I am still going to keep on doing it because if you get a high rank or something like that it can be useful.

INTERVIEWER: It would look good on your CV?

ANGUS: Yeah, so I'm going to stick on with it even though I can't stand it.

INTERVIEWER: And the alternative of Training Band doesn't appeal to you?

ANGUS: No not really, I'll stick with cadets for the time being and just play the guitar.

INTERVIEWER: It's really hard though when you can't stand it.

ANGUS: Yeah, you've got to do it every week.

INTERVIEWER: Twice a week isn't it?

ANGUS: Cadets? Cadets are on Monday afternoon.

INTERVIEWER: That's right and then the camps.

ANGUS: The camp is like one big nightmare, it is really bad because I hate camping, anyway.

INTERVIEWER: It's not your thing at all.

ANGUS: No.

INTERVIEWER: I admire your perseverance, if you don't like it but you just keep going. So the style of music at home, music is accepted everyone plays whatever they want to play and that's no big deal?

ANGUS: Yep.

INTERVIEWER: There's nobody at home that thought you should choose another subject? Nobody thought you should go into something else?

ANGUS: No, not really. They thought it was fine doing that. My sister said, "You should do Art". And I said, "Yeah I wanted to do it but I can't". That's it really. They were happy with what I chose.

INTERVIEWER: Do you do musicianship?

ANGUS: No, my guitar teacher doesn't really talk about it much.

INTERVIEWER: I think it depends a little bit on the instruments that you choose doesn't it?

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: The guitar teacher may not feel it is important and somebody else might. It's hard to know. All right music would have been ok. From Year Seven and Eight, can you talk a little bit more about what Year Seven and Eight music was like?

ANGUS: Well it was fun and I enjoyed it, but sometimes people just muck around. It's not taken all that seriously.

INTERVIEWER: What did you enjoy?

ANGUS: I enjoyed doing, in Year Eight, we did a musical score for a segment of a movie. We sort of had to do the score for it and not so much the rhythmic stuff, but you could add the instruments and stuff and play like that.

INTERVIEWER: Composing stuff, did you do any of that?

ANGUS: Oh just improvisation.

INTERVIEWER: A little bit of that?

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think your instrumental stuff helps with that, that you've done a bit of piano and guitar?

ANGUS: Oh yeah!

INTERVIEWER: Because you've done a few years of piano by the sound of things.

ANGUS: Yeah, I did four or something like that.

INTERVIEWER: So you've probably had a bit more musical understanding than some people in the class.

ANGUS: I guess so.

INTERVIEWER: Music wasn't hard?

ANGUS: Some parts of it were. Some parts, like working out, I'm not very good at clapping rhythms and stuff like that.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think they could have added in any extra styles of music or extra things in the music that would have been interesting?

ANGUS: I guess so. If they said something I would be able to say, but I can't think of any at the moment.

INTERVIEWER: That's all right. I know you did some stuff on the twelve bar blues and that kind of music, did you like that stuff?

ANGUS: I didn't mind the different styles of music but I didn't really like the twelve bar blues.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think being part of the music classes in Year Seven and Eight, when you have such a big variety of motivations in the class, some people don't want to be there and some people are ok about being there and some people really like being there, so you've got a real mixed feeling. It colours it a bit whether you enjoy it or not. Did it colour it for you, so that you thought, "I don't want to be part of music ever again?"

ANGUS: No not really, I'm seriously considering doing music as an elective but I just chose the ones I'm doing at the moment.

INTERVIEWER: It's your fourth option rather than being.

ANGUS: Third or fourth option.

INTERVIEWER: When they gave that presentation at the Year Eight presentation of all the different possible electives, did they talk about music?

ANGUS: I wasn't there at the time. I got a booklet. I can't remember where I was. I think I was in Sydney.

INTERVIEWER: You got the book.

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Does that give you enough detail on all the different subjects or did you have to do a bit more checking out with students who had done the subjects before like Art and different things?

ANGUS: Yeah it gave me a fairly good coverage with all the, with Latin I had to do a bit of asking, like Mr. Simpson who is the Latin teacher, because I will probably want to do that Year Twelve and I don't want to be stopped at the end of Year Ten. You sort of learn the parts of it in Year Nine and Ten and then you get full on in Year Eleven and Year Twelve.

INTERVIEWER: They seem to do translating of bigger passages, it gets really interesting I think as you go on.

ANGUS: You sort of learn all the endings for English so you can see exactly what someone says.

INTERVIEWER: It's pretty fascinating actually isn't it?

ANGUS: Yeah, a language that really isn't spoken any more.

INTERVIEWER: It's still fascinating and useful as you were saying it applies to the English language and it is kind of connected to all these other ones. When you were asking Mr. Simpson about that, what did you ask him?

ANGUS: I just said, "Even if there was one person doing Latin in Year Eleven and Twelve is it still taught?" He said, "Yep that's fine". He still teaches you.

INTERVIEWER: And you'll have Mr Simpson right through for that won't you?

ANGUS: Yep, because he is the only Latin teacher.

INTERVIEWER: And with History you could get different teachers and History you may or may not do after Year Ten?

ANGUS: I would probably do, because there are two histories in Year Eleven and Twelve, there's modern and ancient and I don't know which one I would chose. I would do one of them. I don't know which one I would choose yet, it just depends on how much I like this year because you do all the different types of history in Year Nine and Ten.

INTERVIEWER: Australian history as well. Is that ok?

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: There wasn't anyone else who helped you decide what you wanted to do?

ANGUS: No not really.

INTERVIEWER: You made a decision that you wanted to go on to architecture, or a feeling that is a direction you are thinking about.

ANGUS: Architecture or engineering, probably architecture.

INTERVIEWER: How did you make that decision?

ANGUS: Well I have always sort of liked that sort of thing. When I was about four or five I used to make houses out of bits of rubbish lying around the house and Dad said, "You like that?" and I said, "Yes". I just sort of like doing that sort of thing. I like drawing floor plans and stuff like that.

INTERVIEWER: And if you know you like it, you stuck with it by the sound of things. Do you know anybody who is in architecture?

ANGUS: Yeah I've got a, I don't know what relation he is. He is my Dad's uncle who lives in Melbourne. He is a good architect. Have you been to the Homebush Bay railway place, the railway station? He designed that apparently.

INTERVIEWER: Ok so he's good, he's well known. He obviously does good work. Makes a good living?

ANGUS: Yeah he is quite well off.

INTERVIEWER: When I have been talking to Year Nine people, most people don't know which direction they are going to with careers. Do you think many of your friends decided on their subjects because of the end result with their career?

ANGUS: I'm not sure. I don't really know what my friends want to do.

INTERVIEWER: They probably don't know either.

ANGUS: I know one of them wants to own a restaurant so he did Food Tech, but I don't know about the other ones really. I think he is going to continue doing it in Year Eleven and Twelve.

INTERVIEWER: But they didn't choose subjects according to friends though. They chose it according to what they liked?

ANGUS: Yeah I think so. That's the impression that I got.

INTERVIEWER: It seems people make decisions, well your friends make decisions, according to what they want to do. This school, what do you think this school encourages?

ANGUS: I think it encourages academic things but I think it's like sometimes it is more concerned with the image of the school and that sort of comes with, like if they do well in some academic thing the image is. You can tell by, not that I mind because you miss out on a whole day of school, but you have to go to the WTS carnival and spectate, that happens about four times a year. I think they are concerned about academics but sometimes I think image gets in the way.

INTERVIEWER: So the image rather than area of interest. It's the image that they are worried about, whether they present in a certain way?

ANGUS: It's not the teachers really it's, maybe the Principal sometimes or the person in charge.

INTERVIEWER: So when you go to WTS sports and you are sitting there being bored and all that kind of stuff, are you there for the image of the school?

ANGUS: Yeah the Headmaster wants it to look like the school is supporting their athletes and stuff like that.

INTERVIEWER: How about other things like cadets. Is that important to the school?

ANGUS: Yeah, it's not very important to me. I think with the school it is important because that is an image thing as well, you know marching and everything.

INTERVIEWER: How you present outside to the community, ANZAC Day marches things like that.

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Ok, we've got cadets, academic, sport. Is sport important to the school?

ANGUS: Oh yeah, yeah really important I think to the Headmaster. Especially rugby, like I play soccer and that was, they prefer rugby. I think that sport is really important to the school.

INTERVIEWER: And then music is there somewhere too. Is there an importance placed on say image. How would you place it?

ANGUS: Academic at the top, but sometimes image, and like sport comes with image, you know what I mean? If it wins then the image is.

INTERVIEWER: Academic can be tied to image too maybe.

ANGUS: Yeah, I think academic is at the top but like sometimes image.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think it would be good if they changed that slightly with a little less on image?

ANGUS: I don't really mind it. It's just sort of funny in a way. The school sort of forgets what they really are.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that music should be portrayed in a different way in the school? Within the school, or even outside of the school, to other people. Well as a starting point do you think the school is known as a school that supports musical things?

ANGUS: Yeah I think it is, it has got all the bands and they always play at the cadet marches and Open Day or whatever.

INTERVIEWER: So other people, from outside see it as we have got cadets, we've got whatever.

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: And then in the school do you think music is encouraged, or an interest in musical things is encouraged?

ANGUS: Yeah I think it is encouraged.

INTERVIEWER: Is that ok? Do you think it a reasonable thing to encourage?

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: It will be interesting to see if it all changes when you get a new Head here.

ANGUS: My Dad thinks they will get someone who is pretty similar to the person.

INTERVIEWER: It's the same people who are choosing. I don't know who chooses but. Ok, what are some of the subjects you found difficult in Year Seven and Eight? You may not have found any difficult.

ANGUS: I found a couple difficult. Maths sometimes a few of the things are difficult to work out. I have had fairly good teachers who explain it. Probably Science is the one, because last year I didn't have a very good teacher. He didn't really explain it very well which was pretty hard and the whole class didn't do very well.

INTERVIEWER: That makes it hard. If you don't understand it and you don't have someone who can explain it.

ANGUS: Probably Maths and Science.

INTERVIEWER: This year, is it any different?

ANGUS: This year it is better, I've got better teachers who explain it, especially Science. I am not really finding anything difficult this year.

INTERVIEWER: And your favourite subjects last year were?

ANGUS: Probably Latin, History and I didn't mind Music. Music was pretty good. Probably those three, oh and Art.

INTERVIEWER: And what do you think makes a good teacher?

ANGUS: Probably patience more than anything, because if they've got patience then they can explain it.

INTERVIEWER: Part of being a good teacher is they motivate you to work to a good level. How does a teacher best motivate a student? In Primary School they give you lollies or something.

ANGUS: They give so many class tests, I get one once every week and once every two weeks in Science, and all the marks are tallied up and put on your report and class mark and that probably motivates me the most. You have to learn so that you do well on the test.

INTERVIEWER: It's not the teacher at all, it's that little mark.

ANGUS: Yeah I guess so. Yeah but the teacher explains it all and everything.

INTERVIEWER: And the teacher's style, does that help you to, a teacher explains things well helps you be interested in the material.

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Perhaps if you're interested in the material anyway perhaps you will try hard to do well anyway. The marks play a big part by the sound of things.

ANGUS: Yeah Mum and Dad don't really like it when you get a not very nice mark.

INTERVIEWER: So you are doing it for your Mum and Dad.

ANGUS: Yeah, so they don't.

INTERVIEWER: They're happy, you're happy?

ANGUS: Yeah.

INTERVIEWER: Have you ever considered playing another musical instrument?

ANGUS: No not really, I think one is enough, for me anyway.

INTERVIEWER: That's being very realistic.

ANGUS: I would never get around to practicing it and stuff like that.

INTERVIEWER: That aside, if you had all the time in the world, would you learn another musical instrument?

ANGUS: Probably not actually I would just stick with one instrument and do something else.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think you were good at classroom music?

ANGUS: I was ok, I wasn't particularly good at it but I wasn't too bad. I was just ok.

INTERVIEWER: It wasn't too hard?

ANGUS: No it was cool.

INTERVIEWER: I think we have finished all of the questions. Do you want to add anything at all about subjects and choices and school? You are very welcome to.

ANGUS: Probably not actually.

INTERVIEWER: You've done really well.

Angus was thanked for participating in the interview.

APPENDIX M

Parent Interview Schedule: Interview questions grouped according to motivational categories

Interview Schedule: Parent Interview

Content Categories	Parent Interview Questions
Opening questions designed to gather non-threatening data and serve as a point of departure.	How much discussion did you have with [*child's name*] when s/he was deciding on the elective subjects to choose for Year Nine? What things did you discuss? What did you think were important considerations in choosing the elective subjects? Were there any other subjects that [*child's name*] would like to have done but could not fit in? (What were they?) Why do you think [*child's name*] was interested in studying these subjects? What other things do you think helped [child's name] decide to study *elective one?* What about *elective two*? What do you think helped [child's name] decide to choose this subject? What subjects did you think would be good to choose or at least consider? (Why?) Was there anyone else that [*child's name*] may have discussed his/her choices with? (Who and why?) Probe: Do you think [child's name] was influenced in any way by his/her friends, teachers. What other influences?
Expectancies for success	What were some of the subjects that [*child's name*] found difficult in Years Seven and Eight? Why do you think [*child's name*] has difficulty with these subjects? Which subjects do you think [*child's name*] is, or could be, good at? (Why?) Do you think [*child's name*] was influenced in his/her choice by the results in Year 8?
Task values	Do you have any ideas, or preferences, for [*child's name*]'s career when s/he finishes school? (*If so:* What and why?) Did [*child's name*] ever say anything about how s/he felt about the music class or music teacher in Year Eight? (What were some of the comments?)
Motivation and cognition (contextual factors) **Teacher**	Which teachers did [*child's name*] seem to enjoy most in Year Eight? Why did s/he enjoy these particular teachers? Do you think [child's name] was at all influenced, or could have possibly been influenced, by teachers likely to take particular elective subjects?
Peer group	Are [*child's name*]'s friends in any of his/her elective classes? Do you think any of [*child's name*]'s friends chose their elective subjects together? *(After discussing them with each other)*

School culture	From your perspective, as a parent, what activities do you think the school values in the students? Do you think some activities are valued more by the school than others? (What and why?) How important are these activities in your child's education? Do you value these activities as much as the school? (Why?) *If no:* What do you think is important and why?
Family values	What activities or features of the school influenced you in deciding to send [*child's name*] to this school? Did you ever take lessons on a musical instrument? *(If yes:* What and how long?; *If no:* Would you like to have learned a musical instrument and what instrument and why this instrument?) How would you describe music when you went to school? Would you like to have studied music at a higher level? What types of music do you like listening to?
Motivation and cognition (contextual factors) **Family values**	Do you think it is relevant to have all students in Years Seven and Eight to study music as a compulsory subject? Do you think it is important for students generally to learn a musical instrument while at school? (Why?) *Students who are learning a musical instrument:* How important is it for you that [child's name] learns a musical instrument? (Why?) How was [*child's name*] introduced to instrumental lessons, who encouraged them and how did they choose which instrument to learn? Is s/he enjoying learning the [*instrument*]? How long has s/he been learning? Has [*child's name*] ever asked to change instruments or stop lessons? *Students not learning a musical instrument:* Would you have liked [*child's name*] to learn a musical instrument while at school? (What reasons are there for not learning a musical instrument?) Has [*child's name*] ever suggested an interest in music? How would you evaluate the music course in Year 8 based on what you know from [*child's name*] or that you understand from school brochures, etc? What expectations do you have for the music course in Years Seven and Eight? (Do you have topics or styles of music that you think should covered or activities like performance, composition or book work that should be included?)

APPENDIX N

Sample Parent Interview: Jenny

Purposive sample one:
Parents of student who elected to participate in the classroom music curriculum of Year Nine

Parent Interview: Jenny

INTERVIEWER: How much discussion did you have with Jenny when she was deciding on electives, which elective subjects to choose?

JENNY'S MOTHER: We came along first to the meeting when they talked about all the subjects and we talked quite a lot about the subjects, but Music actually was one she chose quite quickly so that wasn't a problem for her because she chose Music. It was the other ones we were having trouble with.

INTERVIEWER: So Jenny came home, there was no need to really discuss it? Did you, did you ask her or question her, did you think?

JENNY'S MOTHER: No we're not going to help her there because she was actually quite sure she wanted to do Music. She'd seen the other two choose Music and so following from their example, she knows they enjoyed it, so it was really, it just felt it was part of what she wanted to do and she was quite definite about it and she had been even before we went along to the meeting where they talked about all the subjects. She said, "I really know I want to do, Music. It's the other subjects I'm going to have trouble working out", and she sat through the meeting and she said "Yep, Music", and I don't think we talked about it at all, the other subjects.

JENNY'S FATHER: Well I think one of the reasons we chose Kinross for her and for the other kids, but specially for Jenny I suppose, is that she wanted to do Music and she wanted to do it with good tuition in a well-established school in the music area with good teachers, yeah, so we knew this is where.

INTERVIEWER: So it was an easy one really.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes it was.

INTERVIEWER: So what was the other subject? What did Jenny choose?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Computing, and she worried a lot on that one. She likes Computing but it wasn't, she couldn't see any reason for doing Computing, but except, just it might be useful.

JENNY'S FATHER: I think she's a creative person and Computing can be an outlet for creative people. I think a lot of creative people aren't necessarily good at relating to other people but they're good at doing something that they enjoy and can do it independently, and that sums up Jenny. So I think with Music, while she does work in ensemble groups and all the rest of it but loves that, she's still doing her own thing as part of that sort of thing so, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: And that's the one that she had to sort of toss around a little bit?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes. She actually would have chosen a couple of other things but they were in the wrong section so, so there wasn't even the choice from that group. Because she'd chosen Music she was locked into that but that was fine, but it was the rest of it that.

INTERVIEWER: So it eliminated al the other ones in that group line

JENNY'S MOTHER: Which we knew was a difficulty because they'd cut down the electives or something, so that made it difficult. The other thing with Jenny, though, is that she does want to do Music as a career and she was clear that to do that, she's getting lots of instrumental practice, but she has talked about this, that she wants to back that up with more of the understanding of music. So she does have career aspirations too that she is seeking in that.

JENNY'S FATHER: She's said she'd like to be a conductor.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Being an instrumentalist isn't going to be enough for that, she doesn't think, so she wanted to do the subject. She did talk about that quite a lot and did a fair bit of research on the internet about where she would go and how she could broaden her understanding of music so.

INTERVIEWER: You can't recall what the other subject was, though, that was eliminated as a result of Music? It's not important really.

JENNY'S MOTHER: I'll think of it later. I can't think now.

INTERVIEWER: But according to the box, she settled on Computing Studies. Was that something you had to discuss because she was unsure?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes, there were other subjects that were easier for her, perhaps easier, but she wasn't interested in them so it was totally interest. She does actually really like Computers so she's done it because she likes it.

INTERVIEWER: And you were happy with that decision or did you encourage her in any way to do that subject?

JENNY'S MOTHER: No I didn't encourage her. I thought it was a bit hard actually because it wasn't something I would have chosen for her at all, but then looking down the list at the options there was not a really good choice there for her. She's much more interested in history, in Ancient History and things like that, so it could have been Ancient History actually or I think there's another history, World History, so that would have been one possibility. There might have been another one she was thinking of too but it wasn't in that section so we thought, okay, she does have a good handle on computers, so she can do it, but it was more like a fill subject rather than it's direct. It's not going somewhere.

INTERVIEWER: So she decided that one too then it sounds.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes, she did. We talked about that one a fair bit though and she put it off and she put it off and we kept talking about it and then she decided so. But I knew she could do it, it was just that kind of a subject that we weren't sure where it was going, where she was going with it.

INTERVIEWER: So what sort of things did you talk about?

JENNY'S MOTHER: We talked about, for her, because we wanted a subject that wasn't going to be too hard but also wanted a subject that wasn't going to be too easy, that she'd be bored with it because if she's bored she's not going to do very well either, but it was really getting a subject that was kind of interesting. We weren't looking at a subject that was going to be useful because by that time there wasn't one that was going to be useful for her. We looked at Home Economics or something, whatever you call it now, Food Technology.

INTERVIEWER: That was something she was interested in or that was something you suggested?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes. I said, "Do you want to do this one?" because she's very interested in nutrition and all kinds of things like that. But she said "No", and mostly I think it was because of peers and that she didn't want to be following that line of Food Technology. I think it's mostly to do with her friends, the stigma of doing Food Technology, and she said "I don't want to do that, I just don't want to do that". We never could quite get to the bottom of that one.

INTERVIEWER: You think it might be friends-related?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes, and also she labelled that as a subject for those who had no other subject to do or otherwise those that really wanted to go into Food Tech. and she wasn't in either category. So she chose it purely out of, "I think I'll like that subject, I'll enjoy doing it", rather than, "it will be useful".

INTERVIEWER: So you suggested Food Technology, she wasn't keen. Were there any other subjects that you suggested?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Well, the list wasn't that great. We went through each one of them. We decided to drop Latin because she was finding that too hard.

INTERVIEWER: Was that something you were likely to have thought about or considered seriously?

JENNY'S MOTHER: We thought about it because she did it last year but it was too hard and I think if she had done that it would have really disadvantaged her other subjects because she was really struggling with Latin because she missed Year 7. So she was a year behind the other Year 8 students and so that was a struggle for her, so it was really the other thing, if she did Latin it would have degradised the interest in the other subjects.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think Jenny spoke to anyone else about elective subjects? There's some discussion, it sounds. Music she was pretty certain about.

JENNY'S MOTHER: She had talked to people about Music though, because even when I was with her one day, after they had the meeting, David came up to her (I think it's David) and was talking to her about it, about Music, and whether she wanted to do it, and a couple of other kids came up as well, Adrian Hamilton, and she talked also with Anthony Williams. She talked with at least three that I know of, three boys that were in her year. She talked with all of them, they were debating about whether they would do it or not.

INTERVIEWER: Of those three that you mentioned only one did.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Which is interesting to find out.

JENNY'S MOTHER: It's interesting isn't it, because David came up to her quite clearly and said to her, "I think I'll do it", but Adrian was backwards and forwards and she kept reporting to me about how he'd changed his mind. He was thinking this way, he wasn't sure, and Anthony Williams also.

JENNY'S FATHER: I suspect that, I mean, with Jenny it was never an option not to do Music. She was always going to do it. I suspect with other families where it's not such a strong definite thing and they might have aspirations for their children.

INTERVIEWER: The other factors come into play?

JENNY'S FATHER: Of course they do.

JENNY'S MOTHER: She's a very directed girl though. She does what she wants and puts her heart into it. If we were to push her in another direction, we'd have to have a really good reason to do so because if she didn't have her heart in it, it wouldn't work, so she's a pretty good student.

JENNY'S FATHER: She's a pretty focused learner in the areas where she wants to learn, so we thought, "well, she'll do well", but if it's areas where she struggles. We wanted her to be happy at school because school hasn't in the past been easy for Jenny and we really wanted her to work. She's going through a stage of life which isn't easy and, you know, the lower high school years and so, yeah.

INTERVIEWER: You didn't discuss it with Samantha or Eliza?

JENNY'S MOTHER: I think we did, actually. We discussed the alternative subjects too with them, and Eliza had done Computing so she said that Jenny would find it fine. She didn't get a good mark in it mind you, 'cause she didn't come 'til Year 10 but she said, "No, that's fine and I can help you if you need help with Computing". They both thought that she'd enjoy Music because they enjoyed it.

INTERVIEWER: Did Jenny go to her sisters to discuss it or did they just become part of the conversation?

JENNY'S MOTHER: I think it might have been both. She does ask them advice and it came up a few times when we were inside and they would come from their bedrooms.

JENNY'S FATHER: They respect each other's opinions.

JENNY'S MOTHER: I also think Eliza has a similar goal so, not the same area of music but in an area of music, so that's fairly strong.

INTERVIEWER: Who would you describe as Jenny's friends?

JENNY'S MOTHER: At school?

INTERVIEWER: Just a few students.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Oh well, Josie Hugh and Kellie Morrison and Deanne Coil, and Lenora who's the year above, but she tells me that Lenora's leaving so, but then she has other friends in senior years like Julie Charlton, who she really likes and she's great, and Jenny's always liked older kids quite well, rather well, even probably better than her peers so she actually looks to those older models and at Band, the outside Band, the PCYC Band, she spends a lot of time with older people, an older couple in their thirties. He's a teacher. She spends a lot of time with that age group so she watches people ahead of her.

INTERVIEWER: So she's in a class now where there's only two girls, so quite clearly the peer influence was not very strong.

JENNY'S MOTHER: No, it wasn't.

INTERVIEWER: There was discussion but she was pretty decisive.

JENNY'S MOTHER: It was, the same with the boys too.

INTERVIEWER: So with Computing, were there any students in Computing that she said.

JENNY'S MOTHER: I don't think so, no, it was the subject. She chose that subject. As far as I can remember, it was just on the subject. It was totally, unless there was something she didn't tell us, but that was certainly the way she saw it.

INTERVIEWER: From the School's, no, from your perspective what do you see that the school values, or is a priority area in the school, sort of the culture of the place?

JENNY'S FATHER: The School values high academic achievement. It values achievement at the highest level possible for the student. I think they're probably the overriding values. They value sporting prowess, achievement at that level. I think it's important for the School to maintain that level so that it attracts students. I think that's a main priority. It's come out of a past where the School was financially disadvantaged and had to pick itself up by the boot laces and because the Board leadership is, well, the head guy is an accountant, I think all of those influences have been very strong in the school. So dollars relate to bums on seats. How do you do that? You've got to influence the parents. What do they want for their children? They want their children to succeed in life. So I think the high academic and general high achievement levels, there's a very strong value in the School. I think a lesser value is the fact that it's a church school and a strong Christian ethos. It's a lesser value but nonetheless a very important value in the School and I think a value that the School Board recognises is very important to a lot of parents, particularly in country areas, much stronger than it is in the city. But having said that, I don't think that if you had some families in the School who were very strong church-goers, I don't think they'd say that this is a particularly strong Christian school compared to say schools that espouse themselves as being just that. I think that they're strong values.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Music?

JENNY'S FATHER: Well I think that music is just part of the curriculum, academic or performance achievement, like on the sporting field or in a classroom. Music's just an extension of that. Obviously today, people see music, or some people see music as something you could never make any money out of therefore why would your children want to do it. Other people see that as a way to extend the child's brain and it will in fact help to stimulate them generally in their academic life. That's the view that we take and I think you see it with the subjects like Maths, where Music being such a mathematical thing in an applied way, although lots of people would never understand or even think that probably, but I mean I see that in our own kids who are good at Maths, they're good at Music, sort of thing.

JENNY'S MOTHER: I'm never quite sure how much the head people see music, whether they see it as important or not, but it was only yesterday though when I was up at the shop and I was talking up there and I got two reports that the Stage Band

was going well and I thought, hmm, okay, they were proud of it even though they don't understand.

INTERVIEWER: Were they members of the Stage Band?

JENNY'S MOTHER: No, totally non-musical staff.

INTERVIEWER: Staff?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think they value? That's interesting actually. What do you think the staff at this school value? What activities do you think that they think are more important than perhaps others because there are always going to be biases or interests or.

JENNY'S MOTHER: There are. Well certainly we have problems with Music and we knew we would. We were warned about that before we came to the School, but if they miss their, for example, knowing about a test because they were at a music lesson, then that's tough and we've found that. We've found that already a couple of times. Music is a bit of a hindrance to some people, some of the teachers, and I guess we knew that before we came so we can live with that, but we also knew on the other hand that the music was so strong that they would get such good support down with the staff and the students in the music department that they would be strong enough to just let that go in that case, so. But it has turned out to be that way. We're a bit unusual too. We came to the school particularly for being involved with music and musical groups. We didn't really come for the academic which is a bit strange. On the side of it as far as we thought, it would be good for them to be back at an academically orientated school but we really did come with music in mind so we're probably a bit strange in that way.

INTERVIEWER: And that was how you decided to come to the School?

JENNY'S MOTHER: That was one of the main reasons.

JENNY'S FATHER: It was one of the reasons. One was, we'd come out of a situation where we weren't schooling them in a system, we were schooling them at home, so that's unusual. We wanted them to be able to achieve an HSC result through the school system to make the transition to university less complicated, but I think we were doing a lot of music activities outside the school. Some of them we've had to stop because the total music activity has become so huge that it wasn't possible to continue everything outside the school and so we're doing more music now than we did before the kids came to school, I think, but not much more.

JENNY'S MOTHER: But more, we felt it would be good for them to be part of constant groups like Concert Band, like whatever else.

JENNY'S FATHER: We could see the standard was very high from eisteddfods and that sort of thing. The kids had expressed interest and said, "I'd really like to play in that orchestra or that band one day. That would be great", and so we thought, "Well, who are we to stand in their way? We'll let them realise their ambitions".

JENNY'S MOTHER: Some of the children, well Jenny, we're talking about Jenny. Jenny we weren't totally convinced that she needed to extend to a very high level academically, but the others are a different story. We just wanted her to do quite well

but that's not the goal to be a ninety-seven percent student, so we decided for her particularly that being involved in a social situation at the school plus also a music environment, the two things together.

INTERVIEWER: What subjects do think Jenny found difficult in Year 8?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Well, Latin. Latin, provided top difficulty. She really struggled with that one. Being a year behind in vocabulary is not easy.

JENNY'S FATHER: History

JENNY'S MOTHER: Well, she liked History. She had a good teacher.

JENNY'S FATHER: Was English hard for her?

INTERVIEWER: May I ask who the teacher was?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Sonja Jensen and she was colourful enough for Jenny and she understood Jenny.

INTERVIEWER: The right personality?

JENNY'S MOTHER: She was, and she seems to be able to bring students out that may be needing to be brought out and she did, and she and Jenny had a lot of interesting conversations about unusual things and Jenny has an unusual bent in a lot of her thinking so it worked really well. That was good. It encouraged her creativity and her confidence.

INTERVIEWER: That was History, wasn't it?

JENNY'S MOTHER: That was History.

INTERVIEWER: And that was the one that she couldn't choose because Music was sitting in the same box?

JENNY'S MOTHER: That's true. I know when we taught them at home, Neil and Jenny both just loved history. They loved all of history, more than anybody else actually. They just adored it.

INTERVIEWER: So she enjoyed History before she met Sonja Jensen?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes, and because we've travelled as well and she reads biographies endlessly and she just loves that picture and she sees a lot of subjects in terms of her skills. For instance, History, she's very interested, Music also, and she's really interested in looking at the history of music and the music of Italy, and all kinds of other stuff, or the jazz music or the blues, or a film, video that's tied in with some other kind of music, that sort of thing, and she really liked that, and Latin, the reason why she did Latin was for Music, but it was just too hard for her.

INTERVIEWER: That's why she didn't choose to continue with it?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes, because it was too difficult.

JENNY'S FATHER: I was just going to say that while she did well in History because she had an interest and her teacher was able to relate well to her and so that really

worked well as a subject, and even though Music, I suppose, is just such an important part for Jenny and the majority of the Music teachers are fantastic, even though Music is so strong in her mind, she's thinking about music all the time, can't wait to go to the next lesson, there have been situations where the personalities haven't been right, you know of the recent situation, and it just didn't work. It just didn't work, even though music's just coming out her ears all over the place, yet if the personalities aren't right, that's Jenny. I mean, she responds well to a personal contact that's good, and if it's not good she'll just switch off and she won't learn a thing.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think in that recent situation, where the personalities didn't match, do you think if there were no other options, do you think Jenny would have given that instrument away?

JENNY'S MOTHER: No, she would have kept going.

INTERVIEWER: She would have persisted?

JENNY'S MOTHER: She even went back for one more lesson after we'd decided with her that she wasn't going on with that particular teacher and she went back for one more lesson and she used it well. She actually really practised and really worked hard and went in with the right attitude and that's different. A year ago she couldn't have done that. She would have given up. Now she's saying, "I'm going to make it work", so the confidence that she's gained from last year, a fair bit of it has to do with music, so she's able to now rally. I've seen that a few times lately, for instance, Science. She doesn't really enjoy Science very much but she swings just about every Science project around to be somehow musical. I think she's driving the Science teacher crazy but he likes her.

JENNY'S FATHER: He gave her a topic which wasn't specific about Science, but everyone in the class knew this was Science subject.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Oh well, I think half the class didn't, actually.

JENNY'S FATHER: And she just did something totally off track, and we said, "Well, you're not going to get any marks for it".

JENNY'S MOTHER: The topic was colour, and she wrote three different types of colour, but one was music, and she went all out on talking about the colour of music and it was really interesting. He said she would do well in an English class but he wasn't sure about the scientific matter, but he gave her a pass. He was very nice to her. They were doing things on electro-magnetic waves, or something, and she says, "That means that sound doesn't travel in space, there's no music in space" and she writes this in her project. She's just totally focused. The project last year was on the trumpet noise.

INTERVIEWER: I remember that. She even took different instruments, different trumpets even, to measure the sound waves.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes, and she went way out and she was way ahead of her science teacher in understanding them and it was really, really fun. She enjoyed that and did an excellent project. I think it's cyclical for her, it's a starting point but it's also benefited other things.

JENNY'S FATHER: She doesn't quite fit the School mould exactly but.

INTERVIEWER: But she's getting what she can, when she wants to. The next few questions. I think you've almost answered in a way. Which teachers did she enjoy most in Year 8? You've mentioned Mrs. Jensen. Were there any other teachers that she enjoyed or mentioned, that she responded to or enjoyed their class?

JENNY'S MOTHER: She enjoyed Music, that's clear. She enjoyed the instrumental lessons with Dot and by the end of the year she started singing as well

JENNY'S FATHER: Band she enjoyed, and definitely the choirs.

JENNY'S MOTHER: She struggled a bit with English for a while, partly because she didn't get her homework done on time and wasn't sure, her aims were high. When she doesn't think she understands something she doesn't do it. She had to learn that wasn't the right way of behaving, and then they also had three teachers, it was absolutely dreadful in the end, and in Science it was pretty hard too but she got round it, So by the end of the year English was good and she was enjoying it and she'd learnt how to fit into a school situation too.

INTERVIEWER: You asked that Dot, it sounds to me like Jenny would enjoy making music anyway regardless of the teacher, but do you think Dot was a factor? Did she respond to Dot or was it just that she loved playing trombone?

JENNY'S MOTHER: I was talking to her about this just the other day actually. She said that it's not Dot's personality, it's that Dot encourages her, and she said she doesn't have a close affinity with Dot but she knows that Dot respects her and that's it. Dot encourages her and respects her.

INTERVIEWER: And you mentioned earlier that she enjoyed the choirs and bands she was involved in. Again, was there a personality there or did she just love singing?

JENNY'S FATHER: Well, she'd known Paula for years. She was in a choir as quite a young girl.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Oh she was. She was the youngest there

JENNY'S FATHER: That was eight years ago.

INTERVIEWER: So when Paula was taking a particular choir, she was almost looking forward to it

JENNY'S MOTHER: It was a little town choir.

INTERVIEWER: Like the Wyvern Singers?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes, that's right

INTERVIEWER: So if she knew Paula was taking it, that was a factor?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes, absolutely, and then she'd go in and she actually liked Graham's choir too because it had a different type of music.

INTERVIEWER: Not because of Graham?

JENNY'S MOTHER: She liked Graham. She liked the way he explains things, she liked the story behind it because she likes stories. She liked the history behind songs and the way he described things so, yeah, Graham was part of that, and the type of music. Would you agree with that?

JENNY'S FATHER: Yes.

JENNY'S MOTHER: I can't think what other subject she had. She really liked Mrs. Francis in Maths. Mrs. Francis was very good for her. She did well with Mrs. Francis. She didn't enjoy the Geography teacher very much. She didn't like his personality very much at all, Mr. Geddes, but then again, she only had him for six months, but then she learnt what he wanted and she, that must have been the second half of the year. By the second half of the year, she was rolling better and so she rallied and she.

JENNY'S FATHER: What do you mean by 'rallied'? She worked out what he?

JENNY'S MOTHER: She didn't like his manner but she could overcome it. Before that she would have been frightened by his gruff manner but by the second half of the year she said, "Well, I can manage that, I can live with it", and we encouraged her to and when we were talking to her I said, "You know he's your teacher. You have to live with that", and so by the end of the year she was actually doing really well.

JENNY'S FATHER: I don't think there were any particular teachers that were grating on her.

JENNY'S MOTHER: She didn't like PE much.

JENNY'S FATHER: I mean, for instance, Latin, she likes Mr. Simpson, he's a nice man, no problems, and she tried hard for him. No, she just couldn't get the marks. It wasn't to do with not liking the subject or not liking the teacher, it was just that she was a year behind the eight-ball, so I think she chose what she was in fairly good at.

JENNY'S MOTHER: We kind of felt that she had great teachers. We thought they were really good for her and.

JENNY'S FATHER: We would have liked her to do a language that she'd learnt at home but they weren't available.

INTERVIEWER: Earlier we mentioned Latin being a difficult subject for her and that was influencing her choice not to pursue that subject. Do you think the teachers played any part? Were there any teachers, you mentioned Mr. Geddes. He was going to be leaving anyway. There were no teachers where this person's taking that subject so I'd like to do it because they've got it or this person's taking the subject so I don't want to be doing that subject.

JENNY'S MOTHER: No, I don't think so. No. I'm just thinking through the subjects.

JENNY'S FATHER: We could ask her.

INTERVIEWER: How did you evaluate her courses in Year 8? Well no, let's stick to Music. How did you evaluate the Year 8 non-elective Music course from where you were sitting, what you would hear back from Jenny?

JENNY'S FATHER: We would probably say that she thought the course too easy.

JENNY'S MOTHER: But she liked that.

JENNY'S FATHER: She didn't mind it. She gained respect from the other students. They'd always ask her, but I guess she was always a year more advanced than that course.

INTERVIEWER: Was she bored?

JENNY'S FATHER: I don't think she's ever bored doing anything with music. I think there were times she might have been while she was there but she would always think of other things or do other things. She probably did homework during that class. I don't know what she did.

JENNY'S MOTHER: I don't know how she came across in that class either but she really liked being in Music, she liked it, so.

JENNY'S FATHER: She liked being part of it.

INTERVIEWER: So from your perspective, and from what Jenny said, the course seemed very easy or very basic?

JENNY'S FATHER: Yes.

JENNY'S MOTHER: That's last year. This year might be different, I don't know.

JENNY'S FATHER: I'm not sure about that.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Certainly the stuff they talk about in class, and she said what yesterday's conversation was about. What it would be like to be a millionaire, and selling her hair.

INTERVIEWER: That's right, she could get a million dollars for her hair. I don't know where that came from. And Mitchell said that he could win a million dollars because he knew that last question but he didn't know any of them leading up to it. That's just the nature of the group. It's good fun but it's sluggish. It's hard to.

JENNY'S MOTHER: She gets frustrated with that. I think she'd be a very difficult student to teach actually because she's so sure about what she'd be taught and what should be fulfilling. It's okay in Music but in other areas she's so particular. She's said, "No, I don't think they should spend time on this, I don't think", etc., so in Maths, for instance, she doesn't like the way the Maths teacher is teaching this year and things like that. She's so particular. I think she'd be quite hard to teach actually. She finds that really difficult, or playing up in Band or things like that, she finds that really annoying. She finds that with the outside bands too.

JENNY'S FATHER: She'd have a reason, she doesn't like mucking around.

INTERVIEWER: She's very motivated it sounds to me. She knows why she's there and what she wants to achieve from being there. The other people are slowing her down perhaps and are in her way of achieving those things perhaps.

JENNY'S FATHER: Well, she's been used to learning at her own pace in the past.

INTERVIEWER: What expectations do you have for the music course in Year 7 or 8? I suppose Jenny came at the beginning of Year 8 so she'd come to this school to the music course being offered in Year 8. What sort of expectations did you have for that?

JENNY'S FATHER: I didn't have any.

JENNY'S MOTHER: I did. I thought she'd have a nice time. I thought she'd enjoy it. I thought it might cover different things to what she'd done in Musicianship and more understanding of music, a wider type of breadth of music and also that she might have an opportunity to bounce off other kids 'cause Musicianship is very much you're learning on your own, and I thought she might enjoy that. Further than that, I didn't expect her to do really anything in particular.

JENNY'S FATHER: One of the problems for me in answering that question is that when I went to school Music was a compulsory subject in Year 7. We learnt about minims, crotchets and quavers. We learnt about Eine Kleine Nacht Musik and that was about it and we had to be in the choir and at the end of Year 7 we were kicked out. No more music, no more choir, that was it. I don't have a clue what the curriculum is in Music and I wasn't shown a curriculum or sold on the idea of Music. I didn't need to be. I think a lot of people have an idea of what Physics and Chemistry and Maths and English is all about 'cause they remember all that stuff. A lot of parents who might have musical students and perhaps didn't do Music themselves don't really have a clue. It's probably a subject that needs marketing or explaining to parents so that they can make more choices.

INTERVIEWER: So a year later, well I suppose really three terms later, you were placed in that same position again by elective choices and.

JENNY'S FATHER: The parents don't know and the students aren't sure.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Because Eliza and Samantha had just done Music for a year we weren't so badly.

INTERVIEWER: It helped a bit?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes it did, and I think even what you were talking about from school you actually, although you didn't have an understanding of it you actually regretted that.

JENNY'S FATHER: It's okay for Val because she's actually done Grade 7 piano or something and she's played more music than me. She probably understands a bit more of that sort of thing but as an uninformed person I couldn't.

JENNY'S MOTHER: I wanted to do Music, Rob. I'd actually applied to do Music when I was in Year 8 or something and the Music teacher had rung six of us up and said, "Don't do it". It was a great help. "Don't do it because the class has too much variation in the standard and you girls have all done Grade 6 piano or something and so you'll be bored", and I think it was the worst mistake I ever made actually. She talked to my Mum and my Dad.

JENNY'S FATHER: What grade were you?

JENNY'S MOTHER: I don't know, fifth or sixth or something, but she said, "Don't do it because you'll be bored", and I now regret that because I was really, I'm really

ignorant on the breadth of music, I don't understand music, how something is put together. Doing piano to Grade 7 didn't really teach me very much. It was very singular.

JENNY'S FATHER: There's so many more opportunities in Music with the computer age, I think, and the kids have access to every bit of music they might ever want across the internet or buy a CD, it's a lot cheaper to get hold of, easier to get hold of. They understand ten times more than I ever would.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Probably from what we've just said we'd have to be careful not to push our children to do Music because we both regret the gap, but in our case it actually hasn't happened that way so we've given them lots of musical opportunities but they've grabbed them and now, now we don't push them at all. Now we have to hold them back.

INTERVIEWER: It's interesting, though, the story you've just told because Jenny could experience exactly the same thing. The non-elective course for her, she was considerably more advanced and could easily have been suggested.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes, that's true.

INTERVIEWER: You really will be treading water, getting a lot more experience through than our class musicianship lessons. The same applies to our Year 9 to a lesser degree, but it does apply in that students of Jenny's standing are the minority.

JENNY'S MOTHER: That's interesting, isn't it.

INTERVIEWER: So it's interesting that you told that story because by not pursuing that course even though the standard may not have been as challenging as you would like, perhaps you'd still miss out.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes that's right.

INTERVIEWER: And have regrets. You said that you learnt piano up to seventh grade level. Did you sing in the choir?

JENNY'S MOTHER: I sang in every choir. The girls sing better than I do. I'm a, what do you call it, a chorus girl.

INTERVIEWER: Did you sing beyond school or play beyond school?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Andrew did, actually. I only sang until the end of school. I sang in all the musicals and I was in every musical I could be in and I was in the choir, so that's all. Nothing that you had to audition for.

JENNY'S FATHER: I think both Val and I have regrets in the music area. I feel now that I've got musical ability, that it's just wasted, that it's dormant.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Andrew took up piano as an adult. He took up piano as an adult when he was living at Cheltham.

JENNY'S FATHER: When I was about thirty, did it for a year under Margaret Bradman in Glebe somewhere, really enjoyed it but with the pressures of young children, I couldn't continue it and we moved here soon after that, but when I came here someone grabbed me and I joined the City Choir. I tried the tenor line and I

almost couldn't speak at the end of the first practice. I went to bass the next week under Roger Stanton who was leading that group then and I just discovered music and I just loved it and so the ambitions I haven't been able to achieve I've been more than happy to have my children to fulfill them for me.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Same with the PCYC Band when they needed a drummer for the Anzac Day march in the last couple of years.

JENNY'S FATHER: Yes, about three years ago they grabbed me to be bass drummer.

JENNY'S MOTHER: And he knows nothing about drumming or music, so he comes home and gets Eliza and Jenny to tell him what to do and it's been really fun after that.

INTERVIEWER: Did you play on Anzac Day?

JENNY'S FATHER: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: I thought I saw you. You were playing a brass instrument or something?

JENNY'S FATHER: No, bass drum. I've got to keep the beat, the metronome.

INTERVIEWER: So at school, Andrew, you didn't have any opportunity?

JENNY'S FATHER: I had opportunity. I went to Newington College. It had a great cadet brass band, a fantastic band. I had to travel an hour by train every day to school and my parents were against the idea of music in the house because of their, particularly my mother's father who forced her to sit and listen to classical music and so she was really against the idea. She actually is an artist, terrifically creative person.

JENNY'S MOTHER: She also was a boarder and she said she got sick of the noise of music in the boarding house of dreadful pianists. She couldn't handle it.

JENNY'S FATHER: And the funny thing is that I never knew about my dad's father until about five or six years ago when I was singing "Messiah" in the Blue Mountains or somewhere and he came to one of the performances and he said to me just before, my father came and he said, "You know, your grandfather, that's his father, used to be a soloist. He used to sing the Messiah and practise it at home", so he knows all of the solo parts. My dad knows all of the solo parts.

JENNY'S MOTHER: We've got a recording of it.

JENNY'S FATHER: It's somewhere. I don't know where it is, but yeah, you find these things out years later so it's in the blood somewhere.

JENNY'S MOTHER: So it's a part of him.

JENNY'S FATHER: And I'm three-quarters Welsh, so there's a bit of a link there too.

JENNY'S MOTHER: My family's very musical. My father was in the original Australian Boys' Choir for a couple of years and really loved it and sang a lot. My mother used to teach Music. She was a Primary School teacher who taught Music

and took all the choirs and then she started taking adult choirs. Today's standards she probably wouldn't be excellent but Dad and she both used to sing in church choirs and things and they both really loved the harmonising. Dad used to make up songs and used to play a number of instruments and things. My aunt was musical so it's, but Andrew came along, it's like where they didn't encourage it.

JENNY'S FATHER: None of my brothers, well one of my brothers played guitar for a while and that was all. That was really the only music we ever saw in the place.

JENNY'S MOTHER: We all had to do an instrument in our house for a while.

INTERVIEWER: That's interesting. So you discovered music as an adult and now perhaps.

JENNY'S FATHER: Well, I would like to continue but I really can't do that because my time has to be paying for everyone else to do music lessons and also just looking after the family, I have to be there. If I did do my own thing it would have to be in the evening and then I wouldn't be able to help with the home so I'm there seven nights a week.

INTERVIEWER: So, Val, you suggested you regretted the advice your music teacher gave you because of the standard of the classmates?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: And, Andrew, do you regret Mum saying you're not having music because of my experiences.

JENNY'S FATHER: Absolutely. The fact was that I didn't care about it because I didn't know any better. I wasn't envious of the guys playing in the band because I didn't know what joy they got out of playing an instrument. Had I known, I would have been furious.

JENNY'S MOTHER: And I think the first time when I first met you and you were singing, Christmas carols or something, I thought, "This fellow can sing", then I found they put their little radio player in the back room where no one went and they never had any radio or any music in the house at all, and here was someone who could sing!

INTERVIEWER: Are these factors do you think, maybe not, but are they factors in your children learning music because they're all involved heavily.

JENNY'S FATHER: Well, I think one of the big influences was the interest shown in our children by Henry and Paula.

INTERVIEWER: How old were they?

JENNY'S FATHER: I'd say about six or seven.

JENNY'S MOTHER: I think it was after that. It was when they started home school, so that was when they were ten, nine.

JENNY'S FATHER: They were nine, okay.

INTERVIEWER: How did they discover Henry and Paula? How did they meet?

JENNY'S FATHER: Well Henry and Paula saw us.

JENNY'S MOTHER: I'll tell you how they did it. It was circuitous really. They went to Pauline Dwyer's, well first off, they did violin for a little while, the three girls. Jenny wanted to do violin but she's changed her mind now but when she was four she wanted to be a violinist.

INTERVIEWER: She wanted to be a violinist at four?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes. She saw a violinist and she was going to be a violinist.

JENNY'S FATHER: Well, we saw the violinist at Old Sydney Town.

JENNY'S MOTHER: She was so keen to be a violinist. We used to sing a lot at home. I sang a lot. I'm not a very good singer, and Jenny used to tell me to stop and I wouldn't stop but I just kept singing and I just kept singing songs and I think I probably annoyed her. I didn't care. Eliza and Samantha really liked singing and they could sing when they went to school. They sang a lot of little duety things and they seemed to be able to sing quite well at five, could keep a tune, and so did Jenny.

JENNY'S FATHER: It started with choirs.

JENNY'S MOTHER: That's right. Eventually we went on to Patty's for singing with the choir and when Patty was going back to school, Patty was going back to teaching music at St Anthony's, I think that was when she suggested and we were starting home school and we said now that we were at home we could concentrate on music so she said, "Go to Paula". So we started there with singing and within a minute of us being there Henry said, "I want them. I've been watching them". We went to the same church and we didn't even know who he was but he knew us. He said, "I want them to play", and he put all three of them on. Neil was actually playing brass already with another teacher at the Music Centre so he had an extra lesson. He was younger. He'd been playing trombone.

INTERVIEWER: So that little violin performance was pretty important?

JENNY'S MOTHER: It was really.

INTERVIEWER: Jenny walked away as a four-year-old wanting to do that and things started from there.

JENNY'S MOTHER: It fired everybody.

INTERVIEWER: And met people and here we are.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Jim Gill arrived in town and started taking groups.

JENNY'S FATHER: They saw people having fun playing music and doing wonderful things.

INTERVIEWER: But you must have taken them to the performances?

JENNY'S FATHER: This was just an Old Sydney Town thing, a fiddler in the street walking around.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, I see.

JENNY'S FATHER: And this girl came up and played for us when we were sitting down having a cup of tea.

JENNY'S MOTHER: And she could see Jenny loved it so she just played a bit more.

INTERVIEWER: That's interesting.

JENNY'S MOTHER: We did take them to a lot of music stuff. I took them to all the Play School and all the little kid things and stuff at the Opera House and we did go to kindermusic, Jenny actually had to drop out, she couldn't handle the discipline. She couldn't handle that, but Eliza and Samantha could, and Neil went too. He went after that.

JENNY'S FATHER: Henry and Paula really influence them and demanded quality playing and singing and they responded.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yeah, they didn't mind Eliza and Samantha and Jenny, particularly El, putting their bit in and saying, "I think this sounds wrong, I think this sounds right", and they'd say, "Yeah, you're right", and they really encouraged them to be listening.

JENNY'S FATHER: I think that's helped them relate to adults well too. They had that good relationship.

JENNY'S MOTHER: We're not great on performing, individuals performing. We have probably a weakness, all of us in our family, individual music performance and that's something we've been asked to do with children like that but they're very good at ensemble work. They're very good on listening and being part of a team.

JENNY'S FATHER: They've done a fair bit of quartet work together.

JENNY'S MOTHER: I suppose that's a character thing that we actually like to encourage because it appeals to Andrew and I to be a team worker rather than to be a soloist, so that may have been, we haven't encouraged that performing individually enough because maybe I don't know, but we've gone the other way and really worked on the team work like the town orchestra and the bands and things.

JENNY'S FATHER: I think it became obvious that they were capable when I heard the first duet that Eliza and Samantha did in an eisteddfod and I was just staggered at the harmonising that they were able to achieve.

INTERVIEWER: Were they singing or playing?

JENNY'S FATHER: Singing, and I was floored. I thought, "This is really something" and so we just built on that.

INTERVIEWER: What sort of music do you like to listen to yourself?

JENNY'S FATHER: Classical, mainly.

JENNY'S MOTHER: I listen to all kinds of stuff.

JENNY'S FATHER: Jazz is okay, I don't mind it.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes, I listen to jazz. I buy jazz CDs so we enjoy that.

JENNY'S FATHER: I like brass stuff, I like strings.

JENNY'S MOTHER: We also listen to some more modern kind of gospel music too. I'm not really big on heavy music but Jenny likes that.

JENNY'S FATHER: Certainly not popular stuff. You wouldn't call it music really. A lot of that modern stuff, it's just bash and crash. It's very commercial, something which is formed.

JENNY'S MOTHER: I guess one of our other things that we've wanted to encourage individuals in whatever they're good at, so we don't aspire to have all the children really fantastic academically 'cause that's not where they're gifted, so that's been where we've just tried to look at different areas of music because each one of them showed an interest in it.

JENNY'S FATHER: Our challenge is Neil at the moment because he's not showing as much interest in music because it's not so cool.

JENNY'S MOTHER: But he also enjoys it and he comes home happy

JENNY'S FATHER: He has good friends who are musical at this stage, so we're not sure whether to push him through that stage and really direct him or let him get away with doing less and our tendency is to push him through it because I think that's really what he'd like to do at the end of the day.

INTERVIEWER: It's important for him to participate in instrumental music, do you think?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes.

INTERVIEWER: What about all the other children, not your children, but just generally? How important is it that students can look forward to having the experience, instrumental perhaps or vocal?

JENNY'S MOTHER: I think it's very important.

JENNY'S FATHER: Very important.

INTERVIEWER: Perhaps the others don't realise what they are missing.

JENNY'S FATHER: Exactly. I mean, people think music, okay, you can do without it, you're never going to make any money out of it, but what is the world without music? I mean, it's the enrichment of society. You know what I mean? It's something that's there, it's meant to be. You can't just sweep it under the carpet and say, "Let's be clinical about it, let's be economic rationalists and only learn what's important to make a dollar".

JENNY'S MOTHER: We were even, like when we were talking about when Neil had braces and we decided that he should take percussion lessons because he was frustrated with having the braces on his teeth and he just couldn't play the way he wanted so he was kind of on hold for eighteen months, so he took up percussion and now he's quite a good drummer, and Jenny went with him for a bit and that was okay,

and he can pick up the drum sticks at church or somewhere and any time he's quite happy to do that. It's quite easy for him. He won't ever be a fancy drummer probably but he can do it.

JENNY'S FATHER: He's got quite a lot of natural ability.

JENNY'S MOTHER: But he follows the others and he doesn't,

JENNY'S FATHER: It's a reluctance in lots of ways.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Anyway we're not really supposed to be talking about Neil are we, but being involved in the group.

INTERVIEWER: But it's all relevant. Neil's moving into that stage of having his own identity.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes, he is.

INTERVIEWER: I could be speaking to you about him, which would be interesting because it would be a different person with a similar experience and it would be interesting to see how.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Which ones he chooses. He comes home from, last night was interesting because they came home, he came out of Concert Band at five and did Stage Band till six, came home and went back to PCYC Band between seven and nine, came home and forgot to do his homework and had to get up at six to do his homework. It's really hard because we can't quite make apologies. It's really difficult, so he had to do it this morning when it's outside school things, but he comes home from band, he's really happy. He doesn't complain at all. He doesn't think band is boring at this stage or forgets what he has to do and everything else and he has quite nice friends there.

JENNY'S FATHER: But getting him to practise, that's a hard thing to do. You have to push him.

JENNY'S MOTHER: He likes the social.

INTERVIEWER: The social factor is important and that's why the selection of instrument is important. The piano, or something like that, is.

JENNY'S MOTHER: The piano has no socialization so they're not doing piano for that reason, I mean we're doing it for other reasons.

INTERVIEWER: Isn't Neil playing the piano?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes, he is and he's not bad. He plays, Angela's got him onto some good jazz music, stuff that suits his style and she picks the right tunes for him and she's good for him.

INTERVIEWER: What sort of music does Jenny listen to at home? If she went to her bedroom and she had a tape player in there, what would?

JENNY'S MOTHER: She does have a CD player. She has the best collection of anyone I've seen.

JENNY'S FATHER: She'll have classics, she'll have jazz.

JENNY'S MOTHER: She has pop too.

INTERVIEWER: Does she listen to the radio?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yes she does. She gets the ABC FM program, listens to opera. She really loves it, loves opera.

JENNY'S FATHER: She'd like to be an opera singer.

JENNY'S MOTHER: But then I bought her this CD, I actually bought it for the family but she seems to have commandeered it, but anyway it was this jazz trombone guy and she, Christian whatever his name is, I can't remember his name now, but she loves it. It's jazz and blues and trombone, and she really likes it. So she puts that on and then she'll have an operatic thing on straight after it, and she just kind of throws you.

JENNY'S FATHER: She'll have gospel music, modern Christian music. She loves that.

INTERVIEWER: Does she listen to the Star FM 105.9 commercial music?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Actually, she doesn't.

JENNY'S FATHER: No I don't think so.

JENNY'S MOTHER: She does have pop music though. She has Vanessa Amorosi, whatever her name is, and she has a few popular tunes. She really likes the Beatles. She really enjoys, she and I were playing along on a particular CD I have and then she wanted to contrast that so she got out the other one, this was in the middle of breakfast, she got the Beatles one and she was listening to the difference, and so she does that, and she listens to lots of the sixties and the seventies. She really likes that. There's not a lot she doesn't like. She likes the Baroque, she likes those things.

JENNY'S FATHER: She's very interested in rock.

JENNY'S MOTHER: She and Neil are into some heavy stuff together, some heavy rock. She's pretty broad, broader than the others are.

JENNY'S FATHER: She's the voice. She's got the best vocals in the house.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Eliza's pretty good.

JENNY'S FATHER: Eliza's pretty clear, clear as a bell. Jenny's got more fullness in her voice.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Paula thinks Eliza's going fine.

JENNY'S FATHER: She's going alright?

JENNY'S MOTHER: Yeah. Samantha's not particularly, she's not as serious about singing.

JENNY'S FATHER: Vocally those middle teens are difficult years. Even up to eighteen, nineteen, they can be very difficult for girls particularly. Jenny just keeps going though.

INTERVIEWER: I think that's it. We've looked at all sorts of factors with friends and teachers, family, sisters, significant adults, Paula and Henry.

JENNY'S MOTHER: One other thing I think about when we were talking about peers. Her peers are not as musical as she is but they actually admire her for her music and they'll come up and tell me things like, "Oh, Jenny's just done this", and, "Jenny's great", and, "Jenny's this", and that actually works very nicely. It's a special thing that they allow her to be. They don't understand it but they allow her to be that way.

JENNY'S FATHER: They wouldn't have a clue, some of them.

JENNY'S MOTHER: No, but that doesn't matter.

INTERVIEWER: It's still an important factor, isn't it? She's receiving some encouragement.

JENNY'S MOTHER: It's still an important factor. She is.

JENNY'S FATHER: She needs that.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Well, they all do. I agree with you. She has a group of friends that all need encouragement, they're all so different.

JENNY'S FATHER: And she knows that she's different. She doesn't try and be in the cool group. She knows that she's on the out there and she's learning to be proud of that. She's different and that's how she's been made.

JENNY'S MOTHER: When she came top in Music, it was her other friends that told me, three of them I think, before she got any where near me. She couldn't stop smiling all day. They were really proud of it. "Jenny's going to see me tonight, Jenny's going to fly, and Jenny's going to", so they're really nice friends and she likes that, so it's very important for her.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think there are any factors that we may not have discussed that would be influential in music generally, for other people perhaps? Are there any other factors that may influence the decision whether to choose or not to choose Music in Year 9?

JENNY'S MOTHER: I think if they sold it more at school, in terms of the head of the school and sold the school more as a music school, from the top, that would be good.

JENNY'S FATHER: One way you could do that is to try to put in front of more students not with a concert at nine o'clock at night in the Music Centre but somehow or other get it in front of the student body. Maybe not even as a whole but as a group somehow.

JENNY'S MOTHER: Like they played in Assembly today, that would probably do it.

JENNY'S FATHER: Perhaps even students who've graduated from the School, it would show what enjoyment they get, perhaps a career line they've chosen.

JENNY'S MOTHER: And the other side of it is not to wear the Music staff out too much. I'm really concerned about that because there's a lot of expectations on the Music staff doing a lot of things. There's great stuff happening, but unless they get support from up top, you're going to lose your good music teachers. That's really sad, and I know Jenny, Eliza and Samantha are all concerned about that. They're all concerned that if you don't get the support and they're worn too hard, then you'll lose them.

JENNY'S FATHER: But I think there's no doubt that the School has a name as a music school. I think it's a matter of the Board and the higher staff levels appreciating and understanding that better, so it's not just an external sales exercise, it's an internal sales exercise. It really needs to be done. You really need to do a sales job on the Board. You've got to really convince, you've got to help people to appreciate and understand music.

JENNY'S MOTHER: How do you do that Anton?

JENNY'S FATHER: Oh, that's for someone else to do!

INTERVIEWER: I'll put a stop here, thank you for your time. I really appreciate your thoughts and comments.